

A SERIES OF LESSONS

in

BHAKTI YOGA

BY

"BHIKSHU"

**THE ONLY BOOK ON THE RATIONALE
OF BHAKTI YOGA**

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LESSON I

We have treated in brief, rather we have touched only the fringe of the subject, in Chapter VII of our "Advanced Course in Yogi Philosophy and Oriental Occultism," when we stated that Bhakti Yoga is that branch or form of the Yogi Philosophy specially suited to those whose "religious nature" is largely developed and who prefer to grow into an understanding and union with the "Absolute" by the power of Love—by the inspiration that comes from the love of some conception of God and some form of worship that may accompany that conception of Deity. The terminology that was used was the terminology then current, and we used terms such as "Absolute" which mean nothing at all to-day in the language of pragmatism; but we had to use such terms as links between the then current translations of Hindu-Yogi ideas and the then incomplete terminology of the European intellectuals.

At very outset we have to state that our subject is quite circumscribed by the fact that the met-

aphors used in the Hindu Bhakti Yogi Philosophy are untranslatable into western thought forms of expression; at every step, while using English terms, we have to state that the terms do not convey the idea of the complex Sanskrit original. *Bhakti* for instance has been often translated as *faith* and the term has been identified with the western doctrine of faith with which it has nothing to do. *Bhakti* signifies devotion, love, loyalty to something higher than oneself, mingled with an element of respect, reverence, and worship, says Mr. Sturdy, in translating the *Narada Bhakti Sutras*, and, as you can see, the definition given of *Bhakti* is still vague and indefinite.

Bhakti Yoga as the "Doctrine of salvation of love and devotion," says Sturdy again, "will be found everywhere permeating Indian religious thought"—. Again we can see that the idea of Bhakti Yoga is not expressed by this definition; the definition itself is based on a semitic or Christian metaphysic where alone and not in the Hindu concept is there the idea of a something wanting to be saved; the Hindu idea of *Moksha* is belated and not antique thought and even then it does not imply the antithesis of anything more than a temporary Bondage (*Bandha*) to ignorance; never a bondage to sin as is the Christian doctrine.

Great, therefore, will be the difficulty of those who want to compare Bhakti with the Christian doctrine of faith and want to account for its derivation by forced processes from the Christian doctrine or from the roots thereof in Judeo Semitic ontology.

Writing as we do mainly for the English speaking peoples of the world, the majority of them of Europe and America, a general idea of the Christian doctrine of faith is necessary to show the correspondences, coincidences, differences with the Hindu-Yogi doctrine. Says Madame Annie Besant in her "Esoteric Christianity": The general teaching in the early Church on the doctrine of Atonement was that Christ as the representative of humanity faced and conquered Satan the representative of the Dark powers who held humanity in bondage, wrested his captive from him and set him free. Slowly as Christian teachers lost touch with spiritual truths and they reflected their own increasing intolerance and harshness on the pure and loving Father of the teachings of the Christ they represented Him as angry with man and the Christ was made to save man from the wrath of God instead of from the bondage of evil. Then legal phrases intruded still further, materializing the once spiritual idea, and the "scheme of re-

demption" was forensically outlined. The seal was set on the redemption scheme by Anselm in his great work "Cur Deus Homo" and the doctrine which had been slowly growing into the theology of Christendom was thenceforward stamped with the signet of the Church. Roman Catholics and Protestants at the time of the Reformation alike believed in the vicarious and substitutionary character of the Atonement wrought by Christ. There is no dispute between on this point. Luther teaches that Christ did truly and effectually feel for all mankind the wrath of God malediction and death. Flavel says that to the wrath of an infinite God without mixture to the very torments of hell was Christ delivered and that by the hand of his own father. The Anglican homily preaches that sin did pluck God out of heaven to make him feel the horrors and pains of death and that man being a firebrand of hell and a bondsman of the devil was ransomed by the death of His only and well beloved son. The heat of His wrath burning wrath could only be pacified by Jesus, so pleasant was the sacrifice and oblation of His son's death. Edwards being logical saw that there was a gross injustice in sin being twice inflicted, first on Jesus the substitute of mankind, and then on the lost portion of mankind; so he in common with most

Calvinists finds himself compelled to restrict the atonement to the elect and declared that Christ bore the sins not of the world but of the chosen of the world; he suffers not for the world but for them whom thou hast given me. But Edwards adheres firmly to the view of the belief in substitution and rejects the universal atonement for the very reason that to believe Christ died for all is the surest way of proving that he died for none in the sense Christians have hitherto believed. He declares that Christ suffereth the wrath of God for men's sins; that God imposed his wrath due unto and Christ underwent the pains of hell for sin. Owen regards Christ's sufferings as a full valuable compensation to the justice of God for the sins of the elect and says that he underwent that same punishment that they were bound to undergo. Stroud makes Christ drink the cup of the wrath of God; Jenkins says He suffered as one disowned and reprobated and forsaken of God. Dwight considers that he endured God's hatred and contempt. Bishop Jeune tells us that after man had done his worst worse remained for Christ to bear; he had fallen into his father's hands. Archbishop Thomson preaches that the clouds of God's wrath gathered thick over the whole human race; they discharged themselves on

Jesus only. He becomes a curse for us and a vessel of wrath. Liddon echoes the same sentiment; the apostles teach that mankind are slaves and that Christ on the cross is paying their ransom. Christ crucified is voluntarily devoted and accursed—he even speaks of the precise amount of ignominy and pain needed for the redemption and says that the divine victim paid more than was absolutely necessary.

This lengthy quotation is given for stating the basis on which *Bhakti* has arisen in the west; not that these ideas are in any wise correct; not that these ideas are compatible with the growing gentleness of everyday life in the world of civilization to-day, but because as we look backwards over the effects produced by this doctrine we find that belief in it, even in its legal and to us crude exoteric form, is connected with some of the very highest developments of Christian conduct and because of the fact that some of the noblest examples of Christian manhood and womanhood have drawn from it their strength, their inspiration and their comfort.

It would be unjust, continues Besant, not to recognize this fact. And the fact that the doctrine repellent as it is to more thoughtful minds to-day exercised over the minds and hearts of men and

does exercise a compelling fascination, that it has been the root of heroic self-surrenders, of touching and pathetic examples of self-sacrifice in the service of man, is to be recognized and understood; something more there must be hidden therein, some kernel of life which has nourished those who have drawn from it their inspiration. And that something is *faith*, not Christian faith but its ancient Hindu equivalent, *Sradha*, an equivalent as antique as the Vedic literature.

We can understand it better when we read William James in his "Varieties of Religious Experience." "The whole force of the Christian religious Bhakti, therefore, so far as belief in the divine personages determines the prevalent attitude of the believer is in general exerted by the instrumentality of pure ideas of which *nothing* in the individual's past experience directly serves as a model." Immanuel Kant held a curious doctrine about such objects of belief as God, the design of creation, the soul, its freedom and the life hereafter. These things, he said, are not properly objects of knowledge at all. Our conceptions always require a sense content to work with and as the words soul, God, immortality cover no distinctive sense content whatever; it follows that theoretically speaking they are words devoid of

any significance. Yet strangely enough they have a definite meaning for our practice. We can act as if there was a God; feel as if we were free; consider nature as if she were full of special designs, lay plans as if we were to be immortal; and we find then that these words do make a genuine difference in our moral life. Our faith that these unintelligible objects actually exist proves thus to be a full equivalent in practical insight or from the point of view of our action for a knowledge of what they might be, in case we are permitted positively to conceive them. So we have the strange phenomenon, as Kant assures us, of a mind believing with all its strength in the real presence of a set of things of no one of which it can form any notion whatever.

We are quoting largely because we cannot convey the idea of the strange eastern word *Bhakti* otherwise; we are only stating that in its ancient Vedic sense of *Sradha*, *Bhakti* is the "believing in order to know," the believing not necessarily in a reality apprehendable by the senses or the mind, or rather which does not exist at all. And curiously enough it has been admitted even by Christian mystics (*Bhaktas*) that the absence of definite sensible images is positively insisted on by the mystical authorities in all religions as the

sine qua non of a successful orison or contemplation of the divine truths; truly it appears that Bhakti Yoga is based on what strictly speaking need not be true at all.

The crux of the whole of Bhakti Yoga is this *Sradha*, the belief that there is an unseen order and that our supreme good lies in adjusting ourselves harmoniously thereto; rather in a *belief*, a creed whatever the creed may be, that things are so and so whether they are so and so or not; it is a matter of comparative indifference whether the thing believed in (to be true) is true or not; it is of the utmost importance that it is believed in as true. All our attitudes, moral, practical or emotional, as well as religious are due to the objects of our consciousness: the things which we believe to exist whether really or ideally along with ourselves. Such objects may be present to our senses or they may be present to our thought; in either case they elicit from us a reaction and the reaction due to things of thought is notoriously in many cases as strong as that due to sensible presences. It may even be stronger. The memory of an insult may make us angrier than the insult did when we received it. We are frequently more ashamed of our blunders afterwards than we were at the moment of making them; and in general our whole

higher prudential and moral life is based on the fact that material sensations actually present may have a weaker influence on our action than ideas of remoter facts, says William James. This is exactly what we Hindus want to convey by the idea of *Sradha* which by the way is derived from the very ancient root *credo*, *cretin* (slavic), a root-word found even in ancient Lithuanian.

Have then a creed; whatever it may be; believe and you shall be saved, says the Christian; and more tersely, more aptly says the Muslim: "There is none other God but Alla!" Do but realize it; let it be the slogan of this lesson.

"THERE IS NONE OTHER GOD BUT
GOD!"

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LESSON II

On Sradha-Bhakti

Pandit Bhagabhat Kumar Shastri, research scholar of the Hooghly College, Calcutta, in his work on the "Bhakti Cult in Ancient India" would tell you that *sradha-bhakti* was the earliest phase of the cult of devotion and that its traces are to be found in the Rg Veda wherefrom and from elsewhere he quotes elaborately. It is *Sradha* or faith, the believing in order to realize, that brings on realization of the Truth; *Sradha* is the mother and *mantra* is the father of the whole world of ritual, which means that you must have faith and not dissent from the outset as to whether the ritual was to produce benefit or no; Say the ancient texts: "*Sradha* lits the fire, *sradha* pours out the oblation; it is *sradha* that the god takes cognizance of in our prayers; is she not then the divine spirit of the ritual? Yes, she is the embodied spirit or goddess at whom the whole devotion is aimed; she is worshipped morning, evening

and noon; she is to give the reward of piety; she is to grant prosperity; let her inspire the worshipper with the spirit of faith."

Later far than the Vedas are the Puranas, especially the Mahabharata, and its statement hereon is characteristic. In the Shanti Parva (ch. 59) the Mahabharata would tell us that whether the sun arose or not, sages provoked the fire by the spirit of the Law, *Dharma*, and themselves being imbued full of Faith (*sraddhadhanah*) and self-controlled recognized *Sradha* as a mighty instrument; every man was indeed as powerful as was his faith, the *Sradha* in him, the *Sradha* that according to the Bhagavad Gita, the ancient translation of the original conversation between God and earliest man, was itself Man. *Yo yat sraddhah sa eva sah*; we quote the ancient text and translate "every one is as his faith and truly is he of that faith"—nothing more goes to the real make up of man but the Ideas that are of his creed (*sraddha*), the ideas that he has made his own by belief therein.

It is interesting to note the antiquity of the concept of *Sradha* faith as the believing a thing to be true whether it be true or not, for the purposes of faith. This is called *Rita*, as different from

Satya, truth; *Satya* is the actual; *Rita* is the reality; *Satya* is inferior, says the Scripture, to *Rita*; for whereas the Law sanctions occasions when the truth shall be transcended, shalt not be uttered, the law, *Dharma*, is but another aspect of *Rita* and derived from the same root. *Rita* always takes precedence over *satya*; it evolved before the truth and *Rita* is but the moral order that governs the world. *Rita* is not untruth but the truth that is greater than truth, the belief that transcends perception that transcends the truth, by idealizing itself, by objectivizing itself as Reality.

This believing in order to know, *Rita*, was of fiery force said the ancients (even before the Indo-Iranian separation)—and the Iranians carried the word *athar*, from the roots *Rita* and *Dharma*, as the synonym of fire; their fire priest was *Atharvan* the *angiras* (son of fire) of the Indian Aryan. Such is the antique history of the concept of *rita* or *sradha* or faith. The Semitic truly relies on *Sradha* or faith; either in his Shaivism worship of Shiva as the lord that will deliver us from the bondage of all (*pasa*) nooses; or in the Islam of surrender to Alla the transcendent, unknown, not fully knowable, God whom thou shalt believe in; the Christian defines the nature of this faith,

circumscribes and still leaves its nature beyond explanation.

And the Christian scriptures extend their concept of faith, aye even to *Sradha*: "Therefore, when thou doest thine alms, do not sound a trumpet before thee as the hypocrites do; but, let thy left hand not know what thy right hand doeth." Hindu-Yogi Philosophy insists on the utter necessity of avoiding all insincerity in the practice of religious devotion; the Bhakti Yoga must be one pointed, *ekanta*, never attentive to anything else, *ananya*; never adulterated, *avyabhichari* are the words used; for in the inner life the life that is a sacrifice *antar yajna*, where the soul is the sacrificer, *sradha*, oneness, non-division, nondivergence in the Will is the helpmate of the sacrificer, the *Pathni* (wife) of the *Atma*—soul. Many are the verses, advices to guard against the slightest divergence in this Will, against *Asradha*; it is an excellent thing, as says Stilwell, to have to make up your mind definitely, it gives all your arguments a certain definiteness and sharpness when a point is reached at which they are to produce a definite result.

And look you, this is not a matter in which you can dissent from the outset; you *must* have faith. But faith does not mean that you must

accept any of the extant creeds and subordinate yourself thereto accordingly; quite the reverse is the teaching of the Hindu-Yogi Philosophy. And note it in the admirable words of Stilwell: "One of the causes that has shortened life in the past has been the gloomy hue given to it by established religions with their creeds of predestination, foreordination, infant damnation and the belief that the earth was a vale of sorrow from which death uplifted man and liberated him. To-day religion is being lifted up, purified, clarified and man is finding religious hope and joy. No truth can be encompassed by creeds and copyrighted; man should be free to express his own inspiration and not be held in bondage by organizations and creeds; his mind should be always open to new thought which is truth forcing itself on man and be it new thought in an established sect or a new sect with new thoughts that uplift, they are all spiritual elevators; some appeal to one and some to others; they are a part of progress and it is right to progress, to be free to perceive and accept greater enlightenment. When man is ready for a new revelation it is given him. It is always knocking at the portals of thought as the truth in these pages and as God is the same yesterday, to-day

and forever; that which was accomplished in the days of old can be accomplished now."

When we say that you need not accept any of the extant creeds and that you ought not slavishly to subordinate yourself to any of them we do not mean that you should have no creed whatever or that you should be an agnostic. That is far from the theme of Hindu Bhakti Yoga; you cannot in Bhakti Yoga have an "open mind" nor colorless opinions; but on the other hand you must have a creed, *your own creed*—what the creed is, does not at all matter for the purposes of Bhakti Yoga. The Bhakti Yoga is not for the many; it is not for the herd, not for the majority of persons whose actions cancel each other out; for such are those who go on from day to day with a little of this and a little of that, with a few kind and a few unkind thoughts; nothing really gets done for them. They wish a dozen different careers and the force which might have raised them up to eminence in any one of them is wasted. Body and mind are changed, changed beyond recall by night-fall. And, have they, have you asked what meaning hath any, of this change?

The sense then that there is something beyond this herd life to be attained, the desire to reach out to that life is in all Beings is their *Sradha*. This

is the second great lesson of Bhakti Yoga, which adds, as is each one's *Sradha*, that much alone is He.

Christians can attune themselves to this Hindu idea best by studying it along with the quotation from Luther's commentary on the Galatians, Ch. III-19 and II-20: "God," says Luther, "is the God of the humble, the miserable, the oppressed and the desperate and of those that are brought even to nothing; and his nature is to give sight to the blind, to comfort the broken hearted, to justify sinners, to save the very desperate and damned. Now, that pernicious and pestilent opinion of man's own righteousness which will not be a sinner, unclean, miserable, damnable but righteous and why suffereth not God to come to his own natural and proper work. Therefore, God must take his maul in hand (the law I mean) to beat in pieces and bring to nothing this beast with her vain confidence that she may so learn at length by her own misery that she is utterly forlorn and damned. But here lieth the difficulty that when a man is terrified and cast down he is so little able to raise himself and say: "Now I am bruised and afflicted enough; now is the time of grace; now is the time to hear Crist." The foolishness of man's heart is so great that then he rather

seeketh to himself more laws to satisfy his conscience. "If I live," saith he, "I will amend my life; I will do this. I will do that." But here, except thou do quite the contrary, except thou send away Moses with his law and in these terrors and anguish lay hold on Christ who died for thy sins, look to no salvation. Thy cowl, thy shaven crown, thy chastity, thy obedience, thy poverty, thy works, thy merits? What shall all these do? What shall the law of Moses avail?"

What Luther says is that the more literally lost you are, the more literally you are the very being whom Christ's sacrifice has already saved; faith that Christ has genuinely done his work was part of what Luther meant by faith which so far is faith in a fact intellectually conceived of. Something that corresponds to the Sanskrit concept of *Vishvasa*—but this is only one part of Luther's faith, the other part being more vital, the something not intellectual but immediate and intuitive, the assurance namely that I, this individual I, just as I stand, without one plea, etc., am saved now and forever.

Faith, says the modernist Stilwell, is the road we tread when we take our prayers to the principle of life (God) to have them answered; it is sometimes the product of years; at other times it

comes instantly; faith exalts us and by it we seem enabled literally to move mountains but in reality we are lifted up into the perfect expression of life and by means of our faith the mountain disappears. When we reach the heights of perfect faith, there will be no mountains in our way.

God's universe is governed by definite laws and by Faith we are led to understand them; prayer strengthens faith; this is its inherent value; it gives to some such great faith that they are lifted to heights from which they behold the way to the desired blessing.

We cannot alter principle by prayer or bring principle to us; we live in principle; we live in abundance; we are in the midst of plenty all the time and by Faith we lift ourselves up to where we can see the bountiful supply provided for us. Faith unlocks the secret place and its manifold blessings; therefore with all thy gettings get faith—faith that you are the son of a king whose majesty created all that was created; that your Father desires you to have all the blessings of his vast storehouse, the understanding of which will bring to you all His good and perfect gifts. If in want, know that you have not understood the principle of supply and do not pray for material things, but pray for Faith to lift you up to the

understanding of God's bounty, His limitless riches, and by Faith you will enter the world of abundance where there is no lack.

There is ample material in the forests and mountains of earth to build palaces for all the sons of God, and Faith can give you everything that life can produce. Faith is the best friend and travelling companion that man can have. Faith enables you to know that God is the soul of the universe, that you are one with God and may draw from this infinite source an unlimited supply of what you need. There is nothing Faith cannot do for us; have faith in the fact that age is mesmerism; that it is only a man-made lie. Have faith that it is not the will and pleasure of the Infinite for you to express death. Have faith in the power of the life-thought Faith that is yours to have and to hold. But with Faith use understanding and common sense. Do not eat like a madman and expect Faith to give you the existence of a saint.

Faith that death is not a part of life will rob death of its power; if you have only enough faith so that your earthly existence will be like a tallow candle—only burn so long and go out—it will be according to your faith. If you have Faith that you are connected with the principle of life, as

the electric bulb with the dynamo, your life will be much longer—as your faith, so is your life.

Live! Live! Have faith you can live; have faith you will live. This is thy *Sradha*; just before you drop to sleep, say:

“As my mortal body renews itself, so this
night my subconscious mind sings to my
conscious mind all night songs of youth.
I am bathed in youth and all it represents.”

Do this daily as you eat and bathe, and thus you will live and grow young.

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LESSON III

The Rationale of Bhakti Yoga

Says William James in writing on religious mysticism—the *cheshta* of *Bhakti* as the Hindus call it: “Religious mysticism is only one half of mysticism; the other half has no accumulated traditions except those which the text books on insanity supply. Open any of these and you will find abundant cases in which mystical ideas, *Bhakti para*, are cited as characteristic symptoms of enfeebled or deluded states of mind. In delusional insanity, paranoia, as they sometimes call it, we may have a diabolical mysticism—*Asuri Bhakti*, a sort of religious mysticism turned upside down. The same sense of ineffable importance in the smallest events, the same texts and the same words coming with new meanings, the same voices and visions and leadings and missions, the same controllings by extraneous powers; only this time the emotion is pessimistic, instead of consolations we have desolations; the meanings are dreadful; and the powers are enemies to life. It is evident that

from the point of view of their psychological mechanism, the classic mysticism and these lower mysticisms spring from the same mental level, from that great subliminal or transmarginal region of which science is beginning to admit the existence but of which so little is really known. That region contains every kind of matter—seraph and snake abide there side by side. To come from thence is no infallible credential; what comes must be sifted and tested and run the gauntlet of confrontation with the total content of experience just like what comes from the outer world of sense. Its value must be ascertained by empirical methods so long as we are not mystics ourselves.

The subliminal, the sub-conscious, the unconscious, etc. of modern para psychology are terms that they have now invented for that greater content of Man, called in Hindu-Yogi Philosophy *Brahma*. By a man, the Hindus never meant a being whose only consciousness is a little flicker of waking (*jagrat*) consciousness itself comprising at any moment but an insignificant fraction of his total memory, but a being with a consciousness extending and working over the whole range of his personality (*sva*) whether instinctively (*avasa*) or deliberately. That Being does not, like the former, go out of existence every time

man goes to sleep, but continues to function on, even in *svapna* (sleep), turning his attention to vital processes founded at a time of life when he could not speak and before words or other symbols could be used to bring these processes under the purview of the ordinary waking memory. This is the real man, a Being endowed with a stupendous memory and activity and an almost unlimited command over vital processes and even physical processes, a man such as only rare illumined geniuses are ever aware of Being but which we all are though we know it not."

Jung, the famous European psycho-analyst, calls this greater Being of man, "self," the nearest equivalent for self in Sanskrit is *sva* and not *Atma* which latter is a pronoun—and he differentiates between the self and the ego, what is at the "threshold" of consciousness or what perhaps is the threshold of consciousness itself. "By Ego (*Aham*)," says Jung, "I understand a complex of representations which constitute the centrum of my field of consciousness and appears to possess a very high degree of continuity and identity. The ego complex is as much a content as it is a condition of consciousness, since a psychic element is conscious to me just in so far as it is related to my ego-complex. But in as much as the Ego is

only the centrum of my field of consciousness, it is not identical with the totality of my psyche, being merely a complex among other complexes. Hence I discriminate between the Ego (*Aham*) and the Self (*sva*) since the ego is only the subject of my consciousness while the self (*sva*) is the subject of my totality; hence it includes also the unconscious psyche. In this sense the self (*sva*) would be an ideal factor which embraces and includes the ego (*Aham*)."

The expression "field of consciousness"—*Kshetra*, *Temple* it has been called in the ancient Hindu works, e. g. the *Bhagavad Gita*—has but recently come into vogue in the occidental psychology books. Until quite lately the unit of mental life which figured the most was the single "Idea," (in the Sanskrit *Bhava*) supposed to be a definitely outlined thing. But at present psychologists are tending, first to admit that the actual unit is more probably the total mental state, the entire wave of consciousness or field of objects present to the thought at any time; and second to see that it is impossible to outline this wave, his field, with any definiteness. As our mental "fields" succeed one another each has its center of interest around which the objects of which we are less and less attentively conscious fade to a margin so faint

that its limits are unassignable. Some fields are narrow fields and some are wide fields. Usually when we have a wide field we rejoice, for we then see masses of truth together and often get glimpses of relations which we divine rather than see, for they shoot beyond the field into still remoter regions of objectivity, regions which we seem rather to be about to perceive than to perceive actually. At other times, of drowsiness, illness or fatigue, our fields may narrow almost to a point, as in the famous *Arjuna Vishada*, grief of Arjuna, and we find ourselves correspondingly oppressed and contracted.

Taking then this field of consciousness, you will find that a man's ideas, aims and objects form diverse internal groups and systems, relatively independent of one another. Each "aim" which he follows awakens a certain specific kind of interested excitement and gathers a certain group of ideas (from the subconscious), in subordination to it as its associates; and if the aims and excitements are distinct in kind, their groups of ideas may have little in common. When one group is present and engrosses the interest, all the ideas connected with other groups may be excluded from the mental field.

James quotes the case of the President of the United States who, when with paddle, gun and fishing rod he went camping in the wilderness for a vacation, changed his system of ideas from top to bottom. Our ordinary alternations of character, as we pass from one of our aims to another, are not commonly called transformations, because each of them is succeeded rapidly by another in the reverse direction; but whenever one aim grows so stable as to expel definitely its previous rivals from the individual's life, we tend to speak of the phenomenon and perhaps to wonder at it, as a "transformation."

These alternations are the most complete of the ways in which a self may be divided. A less complete way is the simultaneous co-existence of two or more different groups of aims of which one practically holds the right of way and instigates activity, while the others are only pious wishes and never practically come to anything. Such fleeting aspirations are mere whimsies (*asradha*), hypocrisies (*nithyachara*), and exist on the remoter outskirts of the mind and the real self (*sva*) of man, the force behind his energies, is occupied with an entirely different system. As life goes on, there is a constant change of our interests and a consequent change of place in our sys-

tems of ideas from more central to the more peripheral, *avarana* to *vikshepa*, and from more peripheral to more central parts of consciousness.

What brings such changes about is the way in which emotional excitement alters; things hot and vital to us to-day are cold to-morrow. It is as if seen from the hot parts of the field that the other parts appear to us and from these hot parts personal desire and volition make their sallies. They are in short the centers of our dynamic energy, whereas the cold parts leave us indifferent and passive in proportion to their coldness. Now, there may be great oscillation in the emotional interest and the hot places may shift before one as rapidly as the sparks that run through burnt-up paper. Then we have a wavering and divided "self;" or the focus of excitement and heat, the point of view from which the aim is taken, may come to lie permanently within a certain system, e. g. the Christian doctrine of Atonement or the Mahomeddan creed: and then if the change be what is called a "religious" one, Christians call it a "conversion," especially if it be by crises, or sudden; Hindus call it *Vairagya*, or *Vaitrishnya*.

Yes, it is ideas that we see spread (*vitata*) before us, says the Bhagavad Gita, spread before the mentation in this great Field of consciousness. It

is ideas that govern and move all things; guns, bayonets, kings; ships of war, laws are all but outward symbols. And these ideas are neither to be batoned nor shot, nor bayoneted down; you cannot disperse or kill ideas in this way; they thrive and sprout, aye even under the spilling of blood—as the histories of national movements have shown. A mind is a system of ideas, each with the excitement it arouses and with tendencies impulsive and inhibitive which mutually check or re-inforce one another. The collection of ideas alters by subtraction or by addition in the course of experience and the tendencies alter as the organism gets more aged. A mental system may be undermined or weakened by this interstitial alteration, just as a building is, and yet for a time keep upright by dead habit. But a new perception, a sudden emotional shock or an occasion which lays bare the organic alteration which make the whole fabric fall together, and then the center of gravity sinks to an attitude more stable, for the new ideas that reach the center in the re-arrangements seem now to be locked there and the new structure remains permanent. And it does make a great difference to a man whether one set of ideas or another be the center of his energy; and it makes a great difference as regards any set of ideas which he may

posses whether they remain central or peripheral in him. To say that a man is "converted" means in these terms that religious ideas previously peripheral in his consciousness now take a central place and that religious aims form the habitual centre of his energy.

The important fact which this "field" formula states is the indetermination (*Avyakta*) of the margin. Inattentively realized as is the matter which this margin contains, it is nevertheless there and helps both to guide our behaviour and to determine the next movement of our attention. It lies around us like a "magnetic field" inside of which our center of energy runs like a compass needle, as the present phase of consciousness alters into its successor. Our whole past store of memories floats beyond this margin ready at a touch to come in; and the entire mass of residual powers, impulses and knowledges that constitute our empirical self stretches continuously beyond it. So vaguely drawn are the outlines between what is actual and what is potential at any moment of our conscious moment of our conscious life that it is always hard to say of certain mental elements whether we are conscious of them or not.

It was not until 1886 A. D. that the occidentals made a "discovery" that in certain subjects at

least there is not only the consciousness of the ordinary field with its usual center and margin but an addition thereto in the shape of a set of memories, thoughts and feelings which are extra marginal and outside of the primary consciousness altogether, but yet must be classed as conscious facts of some sort able to reveal their presence by unmistakable signs; and this "discovery" of a consciousness existing beyond the field of subliminal cast light to the occidental on many phenomena of religious biography, till then obscure to them. Further research along the lines of psycho-analysis, led to the definition of this extra-marginal sphere as the "unconscious" of Coue, the "Self" of Jung, the "subjective mind" of Hudson, etc., etc.—all names for what the Hindu long ago called the *Avyakṭa*, the form-world beyond the senses. It was found out that the most important consequence of "having" a strongly developed ultra-marginal life of this sort is that one's ordinary fields of consciousness are liable to incursions from it of which the subject does not guess the source, and which, therefore, for him take the form of unaccountable impulses to act, or inhibitions of action, of obsessive ideas, or even of hallucinations of sight and hearing. They have coined a new technical word, *complex*, to indicate the whole

cluster of ideas and emotions which have gathered around some more or less suppressed idea or desire, which acts as a core; in the language of the Gita, this is the *Avasa* which as compulsion neurosis expresses itself in direct ratio as against the "square" of the will repressing it. (Bhagavad Gita XVIII-69, 60).

To the Hindu-Yogi *Avyakta*, the unconscious is the storehouse of memory where every impression we receive from the earliest infancy to the last hour of life is recorded with the minutest accuracy. These memories are not inert or quiescent like the marks on the vulcanite records of a gramophone, they are virtually active, each one forming a thread in the texture of our personality. The sum of all these impressions is the man himself, the ego, the form through which the general life is individualized. The outer man is but a mask—the real self dwells behind the veil of the unconscious.

The unconscious is also a power house; it is dominated by feeling and feeling is the force that impels our lives; it provides the energy for conscious thought and action and for performance of the vital processes of the body. Finally the unconscious plays the part of supervisor over our physical processes. It never sleeps; during the

sleep of the conscious it seems to be made more vigilant than during waking hours.

But what is the function of religion here? What has Bhakti to do with all this psychology? The function of religion is to embody in the most accurate and beautiful symbols the perceptions of the profoundest depths of the self, (*Sva*) or unconscious, and to present them to us with appropriate ceremony at the moments of the greatest susceptibility—for instance: morning, at birth, the change from youth to manhood, marriage, death,—religion can indeed be regarded as the building of a bridge between “conscious” and “unconscious.” And this was illustrated in “Karma Yoga” by the use of the sound “*Aumn*,” wherein by the conscious repetition of the *Aumn* the unconscious was provoked to come into equilibrium with the conscious.

AUMN

BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON IV

The psychology we have adopted in this treatise does not go pat with the psychology of the later Hindu thought, as given first in the *Isvara Krishnan Sankhya* literature, and later adopted by the schools of thought of the Renaissance, now available for us in a condensed form in the "*Sarva Darsana Sangraha*." The character of what we called the "complex" as ever active and the lines of its activity along the *Indriyas* (as understood by *Sankhya* and later Hindu psychology) have to be touched upon and students told exactly where we are; and at the outset of this lesson we may state that we have thrown overboard the *Sankhya* classification, entirely preferring to abide by the ancient Gita forms of thought-expression. The craze for classification that obsesses the dull minds of the learned has been particularly pernicious in the East (as among the Roman mystics). In order to divide states of thought into 84 classes which is—to their fatuity—an object in itself, they do

not hesitate to invent names for quite imaginary states of the mind and to put down the same state of the mind several times. We have, for instance, in the earliest of Sankhya literature the terms *Indriyas* as meaning the senses and sense organs, *Manas*, *Budhi*, *Chitta*, *Antaskarana* (*Manas* as the sum-total of these last four), *Sankalpa*, *Vikalpa*, *Atma*, *Antaratma*, *Paramatma*, *Bhootatma*, *Pratyagatma*, *Jiva*, *Maya*, *Isvara*, *Brahma*, *Brahmam* or (*ParaBrahmam*) — *Linga*, *Mahat*, *Akshara*, etc. etc. etc. And they in this craze for classification utterly ignore the *Upanishad* (the authoritative) statement that *Budhi*, *Manas*, *Linga*, *Mahat*, *Akshara*, are all *Paryaya* words, words that mean several aspects of one and the same thing—the same “President of the United States” at different moments of occurrence.

This is what we have to remember always, that man is a united states, made up of several billion “states,” each of them endowed with self-government, self determination, self-expression, each state being made up of billions of Lives, of billions of Souls, of billions of Gods. If we remember this datum, we can understand that to the original thinkers, Krishna, Budha and the like, whoever they may have been, dug out of their mind a sufficient number of jewels each for us all

to possess and enjoy; and these wretched intellectuals who edited their works, who commented on their works, who redacted their teachings in *their Karikas*, have added bits of glass, plenty of straw, and enough dirt to make up a garland. Very probably these psychologists of more recent date (i. e. about 3000 years ago) were actually using language and technology current in their time. That is clear to students of comparative religion, just as it is part of accepted teaching among the real Yogins of India and the Further East, for they alone can understand why these terms convey different ideas, apparently different in meaning but actually the *very same*, the very, very same thing.

Take the word *Nirvana* which occurs in the *Upanishads* (Vedic) literature, in Puranic literature, in Yogic literature, in Buddhist literature. Each one of the schools that abides by these literatures gives different meanings, different translations of this very simple word—but when you analyze these translations you find that they all come down, at the rock bottom to mean the *very same thing*—though insists very strenuously that it is quite another thing than what the other says. To the Buddhist *Nirvana* means that kind of “death” or passing that leaves nothing behind. (It

is mistranslated as annihilation). But what is It that passes away? Not the *soul*, for to the Buddhists there is no abiding entity like the soul. The Buddhists believe only in passing states of consciousness, each occurring, being born (*Nitya Jatam*) and dying, or passing away (*Nitya mritam*) as representing what others understand by the term "soul." On death of the body, this recurrence of states of consciousness suddenly ceases to be. But does "it" get into *Nirvana*? Rather can we say that *Nirvana* has ensued? No, says the Buddhist. The Thought of the last moment of "life," the last state of consciousness, if of the world and its pains, has force enough to get up another aggregation of *skandhas* (forms) and become "re-incarnated" therein and continue this continual round of occurrence and passing away till by belief in and surrender to the Budha, by belief in and surserviance to the *Dharma* (Law), there ensues *Nirvana* the state where the last thought is not of the world. Reduced to our English forms of expression it is all bewildering.

But the *Upanishad* says almost the very same thing. *Nirvana* is release, says the *Upanishad*. Release from what? Who was bound? Who bound it? What was the bond? And how was the release? Analysed in the utmost we have

statements somewhat like this: The soul, a portion of immortal God (*Paramatma*) was bound, got bound up, or is found to be bound whether apparently or really, in the Human body. Release of the soul from the body, then, should be death, is it not? That is what the more ancient *Sankhyas* (mentioned in the *Shanti Parva* Book XII of the great epic *Mahabharata*) said. Wilful, conscious, induced death is *Moksha* (the Hindu prefers this term for *Nirvana*) according to the Jains even to-day. But, the Hindus say that every kind of "death" is not *Nirvana*, and that it is not necessary to die to get into *Nirvana*. One can be a *Jivanmukta*, freed while in the body, and in active worldly life; *Videhanmukti*, freed irrespective of his embodiment or environment. At "death" one is freed from the physical body but there remains round this one an environment of *Karmasraya*, the past "done" by him—the "past" that has not been "spent" by reaction—action and reaction being equal and opposite on all planes, mental, physical or spiritual. This *Karmasraya* impelled by the force of the last "thought" of the past "life" has power enough to get up another aggregation and be re-incarnated in another body. But Hindu, do you not say that the soul (*atma*) was one with God, or could be one with God, or

as near one with God as possible? Yes, replies the Hindu. The soul is one with God, says one set of the Hindus—did it but realize it, it is freed. That it has to *realize* it, that it did not do it, and what will become of the soul when it realizes its sameness with God are the paradoxes of this school of Thought (*Shankara*); paradoxes which have led to volumes of very ingenious explanations, and very special pleading.

The soul by deep devotion to God becomes one with God, says another sect of the Hindu. Those who have read Ouspensky's "*Tertium Organum*" can understand this position better. It is a dilation of the teaching in the Vedic Brevity (*Mahavakya*) *Tat Tvam Asi*—Thou who are *not that* becomest that. This is somewhat an expression of Bhakti Yoga, the fallacy here being in taking it that Thou becomest That—in taking it that the Dewdrop becomes one with the ocean. Why not the ocean pouring with the dewdrop? This is *Nirvana*, the *Nirvana* of the Buddhist differently rendered.

So with other terms. We have as far as possible avoided the *Sankhya* technology, as it is very confusing, and as the *Sankhya* teachers have made of these terms *Purusha*, *Prakriti*, etc. entities. As all thinkers can realize, one must avoid so far as

possible introducing new entities especially into books intended for the earnest student practitioner, especially for the Bhakti Yogi. But none the less we shall, to avoid all misunderstanding, state what these terms actually meant, with reference to the simple psychology we adopted.

We shall give a simple diagram. The circle represents the "sphere" in the Three-Dimensional world of what *we* call the *Body-Mind* (*Kshetra*), both the "physical body" and the fields of consciousness, for they are in truth but one. The

body-mind is *Loka* the world of which the self (Body-Mind again) *Paramatma* or God is Emperor-King (*Raja* means both "mind" and king). The *Kshetra* is made up of billions of *Points* (souls, lives, *Devas*, *Bhootas*) as they are variously called—each point being a *circle* or *Form*—each being itself a field of consciousness again. The totality of these souls, the totality of these fields of consciousness is called *self* (according to Jung)—*sva* in Hindu literature. In, anywhere, within the totality appears a "threshold of consciousness," a "Form" or circle before the "I," the *centrum* of the fields comprised, for the moment, within that threshold. This is the *Aham*, the "I," that which after all is but a fraction of the whole "I" (*Integrity* or *Akshara*). The Threshold of Consciousness is the Inner circle—and it appears before the "I" either by "contact" (*sparsa*), or sense-function as it has been miscalled, or quite, *naturally* by "*sankalpa*." That is to say even when the senses are not active, the Threshold continues to "form" and reform. Its circle may be delimited (*maya*) by the "I" which here is called the Mind (*manas*); it may be *formed* by the "I" or it may occur independently of the "I" as an *Avashah Karma*, thought function irrespective of the Ego (I).

Life and mentation, are continual formations of these "groups" of Points (Lives, gods, forms, according as you like to call them—*formations* and *dissolutions* of these forms, occurring every moment—histories of uttered Thought). In one sense, it is taken that there is interaction between the "I" and its field, the threshold of consciousness; between the *Kshetra* and the *Kshetrajna*, of each moment—for these are not again entities, mind you—. And it is taken again that in the interaction the "I" (*Mata*) knows, that is to say delimits (*meeyatai*) its field (*meyam*). This is the *Manas* functioning (*Sankalpa*), imagining that it is acting.

This is our difference from *Sankhya* and other schools of thought; that we do not admit of any Ego nor of any "action"—we state, following the Gita, that the Act is the resultant of five factors (XVIII 13 to 16) and never of one. In our view the Mind, *Manas* is *Brahma*, *Svayambhu*, which utters (*Briruhati*) to itself (*Brimhayati*) and becomes "Great," i. e. takes up several points of view in its "complex." *Budhi* is *Nischaya*, the "Ego" again that is a composite of its group of Points, shifting its position decisively with reference to its prior position—what one would call judgment—the equivalent for "action." Where

it, I mean the Ego, flits about, it is called *chitta*; where it, not flitting about, turns within its own circle and makes of an area in that circle its threshold of consciousness, the state is called *Antaskarana*.

We shall say that in this diagram the whole of the Big Circle, the totality of the self, presents itself as an otherness (*Para*) which we find in our experience, or rather which is for want of a better term called *God*.

BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON V

The Coming of God

Then suddenly in a little while, in His own time God comes; the moment may be when we are alone in the darkness under the stars, or while we walk by ourselves, or in a crowd. It may come on in the sinking ship or in the tumult of battle. There is no saying when He may not come to us; out of the Burning Ghat, forth from the sacred love.

The sense of God, says Evelyn Underhill, is not a metaphor; innumerable declarations prove it to be a consciousness as sharp as that which other men have, of color, of light, or heat.

In some way the idea of God comes to the distressed mind at first simply as an Idea without substance or belief; it is read about or it is remembered. In many cases the idea of God has remained for some time simply as an idea floating about in a mind still dissatisfied. God is not believed in but it is realized that if there were such

a Being he would supply the needed consolation and direction and that his continuing purpose would knit together the scattered effort of life, *his* immortality would take the sting off death—under this realization this idea is pursued and elaborated—says H. G. Wells in his “God the Invisible King.” And Wells adds: “For a time there is curiously a resistance to the suggestion that God is truly a person; he is spoken of preferably by such phrases as the purpose in things, as the racial consciousness, as the collective mind. . . .”

About this God concept of Bhakti Yoga it is necessary to be as clear as possible in so far as it is not the Christian concept of God. Says James: “The practical needs and experiences of religion seem to me to be sufficiently met by the belief that beyond each man and in a sense continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be both other and larger than our conscious selves; anything larger will do if only it be large enough to trust for the next step; it need not be infinite; it need not be solitary; it might conceivably be only a larger and more god-like self of which the present self would be a mutilated expression and the universe might conceivably be a collection of such selves of different

degrees of inclusiveness with no absolute unity realized in it at all. Thus would a sort of polytheism return on us, a polytheism which by the way has always been the religion of common people and is so still today, as it was in the ancient Vedic times.

We can therefore understand the *Vedas* when as quoted from the Rg, I.164 they say: "Him the sages call *Indra*, *Mitra*, *Varuna*, *Agni*; he is the divine eagle with its outstretched wings." One existent those versed in the various *Vedas* call by various names; fire, death and vital air—the energy that brings forth the universe, the principle that brings the universe. Not only is there no infinite God but it is not necessary for the moral government of the universe that there should be one God! Most of us pretend in some way to prop it upon our philosophy but the philosophy itself is propped really on this faith.

And herein we have at the start to say that, albeit there is flowery language used by the Bhakti Yogis of India, the language does not convey the idea of God having any metaphysical attributes. The pragmatist says that these attributes are but a shuffling and patching of pedantic dictionary adjectives aloof from morals, aloof from human needs, something which might be used for the

mere word God by one of those logical machines of wood and brass which recent ingenuity has contrived, as well as by a man of flesh and blood. They have the trail of the serpent over them; one feels that in the theologian's hands they are only a set of titles obtained by a mere mechanical manipulation of synonyms; verballity has replaced vision, professionalism has stepped into the place of life. Instead of bread we have a stone; instead of fish a stone or serpent. Did such a conglomeration of abstract terms give really the gist of our knowledge of the deity, schools of theology might indeed continue to flourish, but religion, vital religion would have taken its flight from this world. What keeps religion going is something else than abstract definitions and systems of concatenated adjectives and something different from faculties of theology and their professors. All these things are after-effects, secondary accretions upon those phenomena of vital conversation with the unseen divine, of which I have shown you so many instances renewing themselves in *soecula soeculorum* in the lives of humble private men. And, add James, from the point of view of practical religion the metaphysical monster which they offer to our worship is an absolutely worthless invention of the pedantic mind both in India and in the Occident.

Leaving all these heresies apart we have to say that all religious testimony converges towards a single point.

There is that in the world, call it what you will, which responds to the confidence of those who trust it, declaring itself to them as a fellow worker in the pursuit of eternal values, meeting them with reciprocal loyalty. He is the helper of men sharing their business as creators of value, nearest at hand when the rest has to be encountered, the God who is Love, *Prema*. *Kshetrajnam, mam cha vidhi*, know thou the Spirit and Me too in all embodiments, *sarva kshetreshu, Bharata*, says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita; this is the first letter of the great mystery of being not the existence of the soul that can directly be seen by introspection (*Unmani*) by Hata Yoga practices, not the existence of the Spirit of God in man, but God Himself of whom every man is an incarnation!

This Incarnation of God is the central fact in the history of the individual, the most important contribution of the Hindu-Yogi philosophy to the history of human thought. It is a God, it is God Himself who is born in every Birth of man, it is God that dies with you in every death of man, as He died already countless of myriads of brave deaths; He will come so close to you that at the

last you will not know whether it is He or you that dies and the present death will be swallowed up in His victory.

And let us formulate the teaching about God as it occurs in the innermost teachings of the *Ekanta*, the core of the *Sankhyanta*, *Yoganta*, *VEDANTA* and *Nadanta* systems; it is given as a narration; the facts given are not matters for argument; they are offered not as dogmas but nevertheless without proof, but none the less they are subjects for experience and enjoyment; they are data of centuries of such experience, *Svanubhuti*, on the part of hundreds of sages of the various religious persuasions of India's vast continent.

God comes we know not whence into the conflict of life. Why bother about seeking the causes of God, about seeking even the causes of yourself who art above all causes the first cause of yourself, *Svayambhu*; enough that he was before Abraham, that *Shiva* saw only his feet, that *Brahma* told a lie when he said that he had seen the source of God!

God works in and through men; he is a single spirit, a single Person; he has begun; he will never end. He is the immortal part and leader of mankind; he has motives, he has characteristics, he has an aim. He has by our poor scales of measure-

ment boundless love, boundless courage, boundless generosity.

And above all the fact that God is finite is one on which the adepts among the Bhakta Yogis are very insistent; he is above everything else a personality; to be a personality is to have characteristics—to be limited by characteristics.

The most fundamental difference between this presentation of God and any other is that it promulgates a finite God, a Person, a strongly marked personality, a God of salvation, loving, lovable and inspiring who exists or strives to exist in every individual.

As says H. G. Wells: "About God as a person, it is necessary to be clear and as explicit as possible though perfect clearness a definition of mathematical sharpness is by the very nature of things impossible. When we speak of a person or individual, we think typically of a man and we forget that he was once an embryo and will presently decay; we forget that he came of two people and may beget many, that he has forgotten much and may forget more, that he can be confused, divided against himself, delirious, drunken, drugged or asleep. On the contrary we are in our hasty way of thinking of him apt to suppose him continuous, definite, acting consistently and never forgetting;

but only abstract and theoretical persons are like that—we couple with him the idea of a body; indeed in the common use of the term person there is thought more of the body than of mind.

We speak of a lover possessing the person of his mistress, speak of offenses against the person as opposed to insults, libels or offenses against the property; and the Gods of primitive men and earlier civilizations were that kind of person. They were thought of as living in very splendid bodies and as acting consistently. If they were invisible in the ordinary world, it was because they were aloof or because their persons were too splendid for human eyes.

This is not the sort of personal God that the God of the Bhaktas is; the personality of God may be defined as the capacity for fellowship the fullness of which is, in that God in the heart, whose names are many and yet whose functions are one, a God who is neither the maker of heaven or earth, a God who has little to identify him with Jehovah; the God of the Bhakti Yogi is not the Ultimate Mystery of the Universe; he is not the Transcendence that has come to be part of the Mahomeddan religion; he is the Immanence that is in the heart of man, the Immanence called spirit of God, *Isvara*, that is ~~the guiding~~ and formative process, the

formative agency in the process, bearing with creatures the whole stress and pain and strain of the world and drawing them towards himself with the infinite patience of love, as says Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, XVIII-61.

In this battle of thought between Immanence and Transcendence there may be profound differences of human opinion; it is unnecessary for Bhakti Yoga to consider whether these two aspects of the reality are identical or even to consider the relation between these two presentations; every possible view is there in the stories of the great religions of the world from identification (*Advaita*), complete separation (*Dvaita*), to inequality (*Vishishtadvaita*) and disproportion; but none the less these two remain the basal elements of theology in the world everywhere; it is enough to note that the greatest mystics were among the Sufis who based their faith on the Transcendence of Alla. Men may differ profoundly in their opinions on these points and still be in perfect agreement on the essentials of religion which deals exclusively with Krishna the *Hridayavasi*, God in the heart, God the fragrance in the heart that enchants the soul.

In the words of the pragmatic, whatever it may be on its farther side, the more of ourselves that

we in religious experience or Bhakti Yoga feel ourselves connected, is on its hitherside the subconscious continuation of our conscious life; but it is one of the peculiarities of the invasions from the subconscious region to take on objective appearances and to suggest to the subject an external control; it is conviction of all deep religious experience that it is a Power, a Person not ourselves, resident in the purpose of being that saves and also reveals and teaches.

In the process from sin to holiness there is a change of character so complete that the difference between the two stages may seem greater than the identity, and this leads to paradoxical expressions.

The religious man seems only to have become a self in any full sense by abandoning himself to the inspiration and will-power of another, so that the strength and goodness and purity of that other gradually become his. But even this expression is inadequate, for it suggests an unchanging ego with changing properties, whereas it is the very "I" that *needs* to be changed in the sinner and that *has been* changed in the saint.

In the religious life of the Bhakti Yogi the control is felt as higher, but since on our hypothesis it is primarily the higher faculties of our own larger self that are controlling the sense of union

with the power beyond us is a sense of something not merely apparently but literally true. If we ask how far our transmarginal consciousness carries us if we follow it on its remoter side, overbeliefs begin says James; here mysticism and conversion, rapture and Vedantism and transcendental idealism bring in their monistic interpretations and tell us that the finite self rejoins the absolute self, for it was always one with God and identical with the soul of the world. Here the prophets of all the different religions come with their visions, voices, raptures and other openings supposed by each to authenticate his own peculiar faith.

To the Bhakti Yogi, these visions, voices and raptures are, in the ultimate, acts of love, acts of affection, of *Prema*—which is the word used to “express,” that is to say, convey to our minds the idea of that concentration, or rather pouring of the ocean of God *into* the Dewdrop of the Human Soul. To us that seems a more correct rendering of the experience than the current simile of the waters joining the ocean. The ocean of God is already in, round and everywhere about us. Nearer is He than breathing, closer than Hands or Feet. His coming is an Act of Love, of *Prema*—for you are so dear (*Priya*) to Him.



BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON VI

On Prema, God as Love

In the prior lesson we spoke to you that the sense of God is not a mere metaphor, that innumerable declarations prove it to be a consciousness as sharp as that which other men have, of color, heat and light; that God is truly an *Avatara*, an Event that occurs suddenly, perhaps very quietly in ourselves, filtering (*vataara*) through the veil. Far beyond half way God hastens to meet the purblind; He is ready there on the Threshold just beyond the veil, but He is against the darkness in the eyes of men; the faith that is returning to-day to men, has no superstitious fear of this huge friend, of this Great brother and leader of mankind.

As says the Bhagavad Gita VII.1, the God-sense is the attainment of the certainty that one is not alone in oneself; it is as if one were touched at every point by a being akin to oneself,

pathetic beyond measure, wiser and steadfast and pure in aim; it is completer and more intimate. The cardinal experience is an undoubting, immediate sense of God standing side by side with and touching us, as one who loves us very dearly and one we trust completely; the conviction that God, we Hindoos shall call him Krishna, is still and now our constant though unknown companion.

This is the call of Bhakti Yoga, the call to make the experiment of trusting to this Heart of Things, throwing self-care to the winds in the sure and certain faith that you will not be betrayed, forsaken or deserted and that you are safe in the hands of the Great companion, one who is mighty to save the moment we beckon him, swiftly responsive to any trust we have in his answering fidelity. God is not a more less justifiable inference from religious experience; religious experience is directly awareness of God.

"It is the doctrine of the living Christ which is the most powerful incentive to strenuous effort in the life of Christendom of to-day. But how few of them who believe that He lives and watches over them can tolerate the idea that Krishna and Zoroaster, Buddha all live and watch too, and that all the great ones who have worked on earth for

human good live on and watch!" There is the task to father up the power set free by this logical and racial difference and to garner it into the Divine treasure-house to be used as opportunity affords for the common helping of humanity.

It is, of course, for the Bhakti Yogi to explain this paradox, the doctrine the Living Christ offers to the modern civilized world; and in explaining the strange truism, the Bhakti Yogi bases his statements on the ancient Bhagavad Gita, itself a translation, as we have said, of the original conversation between God and man referred to in the *Parsi Gathas* of Zoroaster, and in the Gilgamesh epic of the Babylonians.

Says the Bhakti Yogi, the truly religious frame of mind is theocentric and not anthropocentric; the fact that God has need of us and not the fact that we have need of him is ultimate to the religious consciousness, to the religious experience. God is not the name for that activity that is divine to the human consciousness; but man is the name for the activity that is human, that is of the son of man, to the Divinity, of the Son of God that is Consciousness, that is Experience, and experience is here used in the sense that Bradley uses it, for the something that overcomes and includes within itself the distinction of varied experiences

themselves from each other and from the world's experience.

Humanity is the shadow of Deity, the veil through which God tries to reveal himself, casting about in the multiplicity of natural forms after an expression through physical means of his own nature; in the thought that God is the life of the universe, one should be reverent to a human being as a *micro Deus*; for as the purpose of nature is to personify the Invisible, human souls are the masks or persons by which the leading parts are enacted with many changes of scenery.

We come here to the peculiar underbelief of Christian theology that Max Muller speaks of. We speak without hesitation of our body as the temple of God and of the voice of God within us; nay we repeat with St. Paul that we live and move and have our being in God—yet we Christians shrink from adopting the plain and simple language of the *Upanishads* that the self of man and the self of God are one; the reason here is psychological rather than otherwise, for while the Hindu in stating that the self of man and the self of God are one, yet is forced to accept a working hypothesis that the two are different at the start and have to be made one, or that the two have to be realized as one, or that the two can remain

virtually one, interrelated and yet not internally unified.

Let us digress somewhat for the sake of Occidental readers so that the rapprochement between Christian doctrine and its correct import in Bhakti Yoga may be brought about. There are three chief schools of thought in India, firstly of *Shankaracharya* according to whom the spirit in man is identical with God or the spirit of God; the statements in the Hindu scriptures as to the individual becoming the supreme spirit are figurative. The second in order of time came *Ramanuja* who teaches that the spirit of God is the only reality and shares community of nature with nothing; conscious and unconscious nature are the two eternal powers of the spirit—consciousness, unconsciousness and the lord of both are the three eternal verities whose being is such that neither consciousness nor unconsciousness nor both can limit Him, is the supreme Lord who makes no effort to escape from limitation or to prevent change of condition. To know these three verities to be what they are said to be, is to attain liberation. The third of the great schools of religion is that of *Madhvacharya* who maintains that the relations between God and man is the relation between master and servant; through evil and blind-

ness this relation is an eternal verity and not one that comes into existence after previous non-existence is not realized. The complete realization, the full realization consequent on a charge of nature by God's grace is salvation.

We have stated these things only to show that these are auto-suggestions in the religious experience; it is not that God is as He has been stated by these to be, but that the God-sense is developed by *any* of these auto-suggestions. What we say here is that irrespective of all these auto-suggestions we can, without any distressful inquiry into ultimate origins or into the rationale of religious hypotheses, bring ourselves to a concept of a spontaneous and developing God arising out of the stresses and strains in our hearts and arising to overcome them.

This is the rapproachment between theological Christianity and Bhakti Yoga, *that* conformably with the doctrine of the Living Christ; Bhakti Yoga states that *every* man, *every* son of man, is informed by the Son of God; that Christ is an *Avatara* that is born in *every* birth, crucified in the pilgrimage of human life, crucified in *every* life, and resurrected by *every* Death of man. God waits always in us for all of us that have the quality to reach him; He has need of us as we have

of Him; he desires us and desires to make himself known to us. As says the immortal Omar Khayyam:—

My true condition I may thus explain
 In two short verses which the whole contain
 From love to thee I now lay down my life
 In hope that thy Love will raise me up again.

Injure not, dishonor not, kill not the God in thee, says Sri Krishma in the Bhagavad Gita VI-30.

The suffering Messiah is truly not Jewish in origin; students of comparative religion and of religious origins have traced him up to ancient Babylon; but he was from beyond Ethiopia, *Yadava* few see him in this Gita verse VI-30.

Let us pause to consider the implications of this teaching; Christians of all ages and times have found that they can come into personal touch with God (Christ); his spirit dwells in them; they are in him and he in them; but they are so lost in the suddenness, in the overwhelmingness of this experience, that they scarcely care to follow its logical implications in the world. Christians, you yourselves have conquered, have become perfectly indifferent, perfectly energetic, perfectly creative, but having united yourselves to the universe or to God, do you care to become acutely conscious that your own fortunate condition is not shared by

that which you now are? Christian, the Hindu Bhakta says, "let not difference be made between any one thing and any other thing—confound not the space marks saying they are one, they are many." Try, Christian, to bring it out.

Commenting on this defect of the Christian theology, G. K. Chesterton says: "Of all conceivable forms of enlightenment, the worst is what these people call the inner light; of all horrible religions the most horrible is the worship of the God within. Any one who knew anybody knows how it would work; that Jones shall worship the God within turns out ultimately to mean that Jones shall worship Jones. Let Jones worship the Sun, Moon, anything rather than the Inner Light, let him worship cats, dogs, crocodiles; the only fun of being a Christian was that a man was not left alone with the Inner Light but definitely recognized an outer light fair as the sun, clear as the moon, terrible as an army with banners."

Having found the Kingdom of God in yourself, find out His Purposes (*anta*) and works (*karma*) in the complex harmony of the external life; for each one of us is free to live as he will and the luxury of this Enjoyment is such that he becomes to avoid the disturbance (*Himsa*) of the equal rights of others; and the true Christian shall,

above loving God, love his neighbor as himself; that love (*prema*) is what we are all tending on to in the onward march of civilization; from casting aside all invidious distinctions, as doth Islam in its religious theory between children and believers and dogs, we are surely progressing on to the stage when we shall recognize the Divine Discontent, the Battle of Life in *every* creature, in every man, and thus recognizing, each one does not injure *himself* at all.

The phenomena of psychical research indicate that there is absolute connection between minds here and now existing in ways over and beyond those accounted for by the senses; though our ordinary normal consciousness are severed from each other and apparently distinct, so that we communicate with each other through speech and writing, we are nevertheless all in connection with each other in subliminal levels; but that is not alone what Bhakti Yoga teaches; it adds that just as God, in mathematical language, is a dimension existing beyond and interpenetrating the dimension of what is behind and beyond Thought, aye, even beyond Sacrifice, we in the profoundest depths of being are a Divine Company with God as the Divine Captain; and we are as if the coming of God into the consciousness (*Bodha*) of a

bridged a thousand misunderstandings and brought us into fellowship with a multitude of people.

God truly loves his followers as a great captain loves his men, who are foolish, so helpless in themselves, so confiding and yet whose faith alone makes him possible. God's love is *Dharma*, an austere love; the spirit of God will not hesitate to send us to torment, poverty, and bodily death; in thought no less than in action we must be ready for the great Adventure called Life, ready to set forth into the unknown, each one for himself in reliance on the spirit of God! *Yudhyasva Vigata Jvarah*, Gita III.30.

BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON VII

When we said that the essence of Bhakti was *prema*, we had not been definite; for the reason that love is not the correct expression for the word *prema*; *Prema*, says Sturdy, signifies intense devotion, the love and loyalty of an equal to an equal; and is higher(?) form. It is the stage in which the devotee stands to deity in the light of beloved and lover, to be followed later by a complete identity of the two; and he gives a literal translation of the *Narada Bhakti Sutras* where *prema* is dealt with in terminology that is, that continues, untranslatable, unless recourse be had to erotic symbolism; this has been the danger-point on which the Bhakti Yogins have been wrecked as shown in the perverseness with which the half-learned sanskritists of to-day are reading both the Bhagavata life of Krishna and the *Shakta Agamas*, on the "Divine Lady."

And look you, *Prema*, the divine love of the Bhaktas, is not a sloppy feeling of maudlin, sentimental kindness of the sort preached from the

pulpits and platforms. The majority of people, says Frater O. M., of the Christian Science, Theosophical, New Thought type think that a lot of flabby thoughts, sending out streams of love in the six quarters will help them. It won't; Love is a pure flame, as swift and as deadly as lightning; that is *Prema*, the kind of love that the Bhakta Yogi needs, the kind of love that God needs. "Just as you are pleased with your sons around you, just as *Rudra* is surrounded by his *Ganas* (hosts of spirits), just as I the Lord am pleased with Sri Lekshmi are my Bhaktas be pleased with Me; for he alone is the Bhakta Yogi to whom God is dear."

No one who understands the religious life, says Wells, seeks conversion by argument; first one must feel the need of God; then one must form an acceptable idea of God, acceptable to himself; one may still doubt if God will come.

The real coming of God is not that; He comes, fitfully comes with visible signs and puts men beside themselves; sometimes He is an abiding presence enlightening presence, guiding, strengthening. The change is an *irradiation* of the mind; everything as it was before; only now it is aflame; suddenly the light fills one's eyes; one knows God has arisen and that doubt has fled forever.

The subject of the experiences of Bhakti Yoga says that the experience, the sense of God, *Prema*, defies expression, that no adequate report of its contents can be given in words; it follows from this that its quality must be directly experienced; the state is a state of feeling, rather than a state of the intellect. No one can make clear to another who has never had a certain feeling in what the quality or worth of it consists; one must have musical ears to know the value of a symphony; one must have been in love oneself to understand a lover's state of mind. But there is this factum, also, that the Bhakti Yoga states are also states of knowledge; they are states of insight into depths of truth unplumbed by the discursive intellect; they are illuminations, revelations full of significance and importance, all inarticulate though they remain, and as a rule they carry with them a curious sense of authority for after time.

Leaving aside all the erotic symbology, we have the pure definitions of the Bhagavad Gita on what this love for God of man is. His love, *prema*, must be firstly of that nature that knows no difference between any one thing and any other thing, *advешta*. It must keep in him the attitude of the Friend, *Mithra*; and as the greatest friend of all is symbolized by the Sun, *Mitra*, the mental

status of the Bhakta Yogi has to be that of the Sun, shedding light on all alike, warmth on all alike with none to call friend or foe. The Bhakta Yogi will most certainly profess a kind of universalism; he will assert that whensoever men have called on any God and have found that comfort and fellowship and courage and that sense of God's compassion within them, that inner light which is the quintessence of all experience, it was the True God that answered man.

The fruit of the spirit, the qualities that endear God to man, is a marked increase of the qualities whose social values we have been long inclined to underestimate; long temperedness, kindness and goodness as well as others the world values—honor, considerateness, self-control; these virtues are taken into practice as so many idealizations of God, so many ways that God endears himself to man.

The outward duties of those to whom God can be held dear (*priya*) must be a constant attempt to be utterly truthful with oneself; (2) a constant attempt, a sedulousness to keep oneself bright and fit for God's service; (3) to increase one's knowledge and powers; (4) and a hidden persistent watchfulness of one's baser motive, a watch against fear, indolence, vanity, greed, distrust, envy,

malice, uncharitableness. This in effect is what the Bhagavad Gita says in the chapter said to be specially devoted to Bhakti Yoga, Ch. XII.

There is no act altogether without significance, no power so humble that it may not be used for God; no life but can orient itself towards him; there is scarcely any faith, however mean and preposterous, that has not been a way to holiness; the religious life of Bhakti Yoga is a reality that can clothe itself in many garments; our concern is with the life and not with the garments. Just a leaf, a flower plucked from the roadside bush, a berry that the birds have left, a dew-drop of water shining in the pleasant glade, O! render unto me! I am here yearning to accept, waiting to accept, to enjoy what the striving ones devoted to me offer unto me, says the plaintive voice of the Lord of Hearts, Krishna, in the Bhagavad Gita, IX-26.

Yes, the universe is full of God! The sense world from the time of the Chaldeans was no longer an illusion, but a manifestation in different kingdoms, in mountain, and seas, in air, and fire and water, of the spiritual activity of the powers existing behind it whose laws man is continuing to learn! Nature is the garment of God; life is but God's character; be thou devoted to Him.

We give a quotation from our notes about twenty years old; we cannot trace their authorship: "Bhakti means much more than the emotion which moves out towards a much loved and honoured person in ordinary life, though such emotion has much in common with it and may well become its root. It is an attitude of mind that must be experienced in order to be understood, but some sense of what it is may be felt if we take the strongest love and the deepest veneration we may feel for some friend, purify these from every taint of selfishness, intensify them to the utmost we are able to imagine, interweave with them the fullest trust and self-surrender, and offer them to a Being who realizes in the concrete all we can dream of as abstract perfection. This devotion is not the kind of devotion which expresses itself in name, in squeamings after a crudely conceived ideal, seeks postmortem happiness as the Recompense, fix its services or occupies a heart in common with various other feelings and ambitions. It is a devotion that is intense, irresistible, complete and that cannot be turned aside from its object by any lower love; it has in itself the seed of wisdom, for its sole desire being to become a channel for the divine Law, that intense desire, gives insight into the nature of things and love

makes wise. Also it brings about extreme purity, as much devotion cannot tolerate any uncleanness in the heart and the life that it offers as sacrifice to the Lord. A person who is full of such devotion and in whom devotion has extirpated all the useless desires may rise high on the path in an incarnation in which very little external knowledge has been acquired. But it must be remembered that devotion of such quality as has been described is rare, far rarer than intellectual ability and far more difficult to evolve. Nor can this devotion be developed until the ego has by long experience grown weary of all earthly objects and is athirst for God, turning aside from all beautiful things to that which is Beauty itself. Those who would develop it in the future must begin by unselfishly loving and serving the highest they can now conceive, performing every action as a sacrifice without thought of reward. Such love and service gradually evolve into true devotion, the highest and noblest of human qualities, and that which finally unites man with God."

This paragraph also gives the answer for the question often asked: How can I develop devotion? Love and Service to our superiors whom we meet in our daily life becomes the first germ of the loftiest emotion. We love a person whom we

feel to be above us, and then taking this feeling, we purify it, we seek to do him any service within our power, not obtrusively, not demanding gratitude, nor seeking even recognition, but serving for pure love's sake. In order to discredit the longing for possession and the craving for return which oftentimes defile love, we may try to do things without appearing as the doer, finding joy in the giving though none may trace our hand. Not that there is aught evil in the enjoyment of love returned or necessarily selfish in the happiness that flows from the presence of one beloved. The masters themselves take joy in the love of their disciples; and love is the only thing he can do, yet stoop to accept the love he brings. "As though the sun should thank us for letting light in." Once we can serve as freely and as gladly unknown as known, unthanked as thanked, we need not fear that love given to us will make us selfish, but until this is so we should ever watchfully analyze our motives and try to purify the heart.

Nor need we fear lest we should love too much, if thus we nurture selfishness, for the power of love, like everything else that is living, grows and expands with use and atrophies in inaction. Only more and more should we seek to see the self in those we love, and love the shrine for the

sake of the treasure which it contains and allows to shine forth. We should seek to disregard the outer shell and pierce to the Man within. Any one who is capable of steady, selfless love and service to a friend will develop the higher devotion when he arrives towards it, and when he begins to realize a little what the master is, the current of his love will set itself in His direction. Hence the would-be Bhakta (devoter or lover) meditates on the master and tries to think of Him as a living man. The feeling cannot, ought not to be forced, for it arises spontaneously when some contact on the inner planes of being has made Him a reality to the aspirant. But it may be given a chance of developing by meditating on those of the Bhagavad Gita that manifest the character of Sree Krishna, by thinking of strength, tenderness, wisdom, compassion, all raised to ideal heights and embodied in a perfect individual, of holding the brain still and seeking to soar beyond it, aspiring towards longing for the meeting with thy Master face to face.

Very often devotion is enkindled by associating and talking with Bhaktas. As flame is enkindled by flame, so heart catches fire from the heart, says Sri Krishna. The wise adore me, in rapt devotion, Mindful of me, their life hidden in me, illuminat-

ing each other, every conversing about me, they are content and joyful. (Bhagavat Gita, X-8 & 9). In the East, students are always advised to seek the company of holy men and listen to their conversation, thus fanning into flame a little spark of love and earnestness. Only a strong soul can keep itself glowing in isolation, and the beginner will do well to take any opportunity that may come his way to strengthen his own aspirations by communion with others who share them.

Most sure perhaps of all methods of enkindling devotion is the seeking His work in daily life, performing every duty as a voluntary sacrifice to Him, taking every suffering as a means of purifying the lower self so as to be fit to stand in His presence, going out into the world only to do His pleasure, consecrating to Him every power and every faculty; finding all joy, tasteless while His presence is veiled and all tasks delightful that are the carrying out of His will. Such wholesome, practical devotion will in due time wear away every barrier raised by illusion and ignorance between the aspirant and the Master, and he shall feel the joy which lifts him away from earth.

Many will think the description of the feeling exaggerated. Be it so. Let such take what they can of the intellectual teaching, live their highest,

follow their ideals, lead pure and unselfish (ideal) lives, thus shall they rise by a road suited to their own temperament. Yet it may be that, later, they too shall long for, seek and wear the *Anandamaya-kosa*. In any case while giving the way best fitted for them, let them not blame nor despise their brothers who follow the path of devotion. Always *go about* as if you were wearing the *Body of Love*, the "Prema" of that God to whom you are dear, so very dear.

BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON VIII

On Prasada

"It is the amazing and distressful discovery of every believer so soon as the first exaltation of belief is past, that one does not remain always in touch with God. At first it seems incredible that one should ever have any motive again that is not also God's motive. Then one finds oneself caught unaware by a base impulse: he discovers that discontinuousness of our apparently homogeneous selves, the unincorporated and warring elements that seemed at first altogether absent from the synthesis of conversion. We are tripped up by forgetfulness, by distraction, by old habits, by tricks of appearance. There come dull patches of existence; those mysterious obliterations of one's finer sense, that are due at times to the little minor poisons that one eats or drinks, to phases of fatigue, ill-health or bodily disorder or one is betrayed by some unanticipated storm of emotion, brewed deep in the animal being and released by

any trifling incident, such as personal jealousy or at best one is relaxed by contentment into vacuity."—Wells.

"Persons without faith enough in the power of this rule of life, not having reached Me, return to the Paths of Death and Travail (*samsara*)"—Bhagavad Gita, IX-3. (By persons (*Purusha*) is meant the *Quanta* of the cells making up the '*Purusha*' in each body).

The idea of God as a sovereign potentate governing the universe under a system of iron law, the legislator of nature and taskmaster of the soul, the rewarder of them that obey and the punisher of them that disobey, is an idea borrowed from politics, the form of the idea most convenient to those who need God as an ally in the maintenance of law and order as they conceive them—an idea that need not be true to the reality—an idea that springs from the worldly interest anxious to secure God for an ally. Says Sankara on XVI-19: "They are given to these and other great vices; moreover they hate Me the *Isvara* abiding in their own and other bodies as the witness of their thoughts and actions. To hate me is to transgress my commands. They are malicious, jealous of the virtue of those that tread the right path. These deluded creatures are born birth after birth in tamasic

wombs, those of tigers, lions, wolves, vultures (among men) and pass into lower status." Ramanuja has it that after their evil *Karma* has been exhausted they return from hell; Madhva is *very* severe. In his view they go to the hell of eternal damnation, having for a while been in the cycle of *samsara*. This divine frightfulness is, of course, the natural human dislike for too sunny a spirit of carelessness, a distrust for queer practices, a dislike reinforced by the latent fierceness of the ape in us, giving it an excuse and pressing permission upon it, handing it over the thing disliked to the secular arm. Priestcraft and priestly power release an aggressive and narrow disposition to a recklessness of suffering and a hatred of liberty that surely exceeds the badness of any other sort of men.

Right down to to-day the heresy of God the Avenger haunts religion. It is only in recent years that the growing gentleness of everyday life has begun to make men a little ashamed of a Deity less tolerant than themselves.

Says Telang: "The language used in describing the Demoniak mentioned in the Gita is not remarkable for the sweetness towards them, while Krishna says positively 'I hurl them down such people into demoniac wombs whereby they go

down into misery and Hell.' ” (But would it not be as well to read Gita VII-6 for definition of wombs; also *Kshipa* means the offer of the oblation in sacrifice, *vide Anu Gita*). Of course, Krishna is misread thus by the scholiasts.

Yes, it comes about that, to many people, God is nothing more as yet than a magnificent fetish. They did not really want Him but they have heard He is potent stuff. They call on His name, they do certain things that are supposed to be peculiarly influential with Him, such as saying prayers and repeating gross praises of Him, or reading in a blind industrious way their miscellany of the Scripture and such like mental mortification and making their Sabbath dull and uncomfortable.

“Those who perform severe austerities against the ordinance ‘Do what thou wilt’ out of pride and selfishness, with force of passion and desire.” Gita XVII-5.

“Worry the hordes of cells (*Bhootah*) in the Body, the poor mindless cells, worrying me too in the Purpose of the body—know these are of *Asura* views.” Gita XVII-6.

(The great tragedy of human life has been the amount of religious force that has been expended in vain efforts to obtain God’s help).

They are of wasted desires, of wasted thoughts, of dull knowledge, of irresponsible, of fiendish and cruel predilections." Gita IX-12.

"They are filled with the intoxications of wealth and power and pride. They think of themselves only; utterly so, they vaunt out empty praises of God, out of vanity, against the ordinance." Gita XVI-17.

"They are selfish, passionate, vain, overpowering, angry; they dislike me in them and in others everything of 'me'." Gita XVI-18.

"These of wrongly acts, of deluded selves, worst among men, do not reach me! Their knowledge is lost they are in mist (*Maya*); they are subject to the pull of the 'struggle' in earthly life." Gita VII-15.

MAYAYAPAHRITA JANANAH—Those who think in terms of absolute knowledge do not know anything, for the world is a world of Relativity.

"Them, these cruel men, these worst among men, do I put again into the Bosom (*Yoni*) of life, of Hard (*Ashubham*) life, into the struggle for existence." Gita XVI-19.

Abyss or Hell is called Mother (*Yoni*) to indicate that man's abode with her fits him for

progress up in the spiritual world. Even chastisement is a phase of the Divine mercy because it seeks, not to punish but correct the wrong doer, c. f. The *Garbhopanishad*. *Yonis* have been defined in VII chapter of Gita. *Kshipa* is not throw, but place, put as into a sacrificial fire to be purified, to become Immortal.

“Having obtained earth life, fools in every travail (birth), not reaching out to Me, reach the worst (*Adhama*) state.” Gita XVI-20.

The worst state is not for the ordinary soul but for the worst part of the soul.—(A note on Hell or the *Adhama Gati* by Madame H. P. Blavatsky is interesting theology).

The personal soul of the one who has never had a thought not concerned with the animal self, having nothing to transmit to God, becomes separated from the Ego. It can graft nothing of self on that eternal trace whose saps throw out millions of personalities like leaves from its branches, leaves which wither, die and fall at the end of their season. These personalities bud, blossom forth and expire, some without leaving a trace behind.

When the Divine ego is reft away from the sinful personality, because matter with its psychic and astral vibrations is then by the very intensity

of its combinations placed beyond the control of the ego, the soulless man after death is again and again re-incarnated into new personalities, each one more abject from the other. The impulse of animal life is too strong; it may not wear itself out in one or two lives only.

In rarer cases, however, when there is no longer any hope that even a remnant of the lower light will, owing to favourable conditions, say even a short period of spiritual aspiration and repentance, attract back to itself its parent ego, *Karma* leads the Higher Ego back to new incarnations, then something more dreadful may happen. The spook becomes a Dweller on the threshold; led by affinity and attraction, it forces itself on the astral current and declares war on the lower light which had replaced it in the new tabernacle of the ego.

Powerless to discern the voice of God, the personal ego begins by becoming virtually dead during the life of the body and ends by being annihilated as a complete immortal soul, a co-worker with destruction, albeit highly intellectual and spiritual for evil. Earth life (*Bhoumam Narakam*) is, however, the only Hell that exists for men of our humanity on this globe.

There is hope still, however, for a person who has lost his Higher soul through his vices while

he is yet in the body. He may still be redeemed and made to turn on his material nature. For either an intense feeling of repentance, or one single earnest appeal to the God that has fled, or best of all, an active effort to amend one's ways, may bring the Higher ego back again.

Else, bereft of the labourer, both field and harvest now being lost, the Master in the infinitude of his thought, naturally preserves no recollection of the finite and evanescent illusion which had been his last personality. And then, indeed, is the latter lost.

The divine ego either recommences immediately under its own Karmic impulses a fresh series of incarnations or (b) it seeks and finds refuge in the bosom of *Avyakta*; freed from the life impressions of personality, it merges into a kind of Nirvanic interlude where there is nothing but the eternal Present, all Past being lost.

But, affirms the Lord, in the Bhagavad Gita:—
But be his sin great or small, once that a man has found me and serves me with undivided devotion, he becomes sound again, for he is well-established. (IX-30.) You may kill or hang for it, you may rob or rape, but the moment you truly repent and set yourself to such atonement and reparation as

is possible, there remains no barrier between you and God.

A convicted criminal frankly penitent and neither obdurate nor abject, whatever the evil of his yesterdays, may still die bravely on the gallows to the glory of God.

This is the express teaching of Bhakti Yoga, the teaching of *Prasada*, the Divine Grace, called in Tamil *Arul*, in Parsi *Mihr-ban*, by the Semitics *Rahman*; a doctrine on which the Christians have only the shred of a shadow, which shred they would still whittle down from "grace" to "loving kindness" in the Moffat version of the Bible. Says the Gita, Reliant on Me, whatever their origins, be it woman or slave, jew or gentile, traders or listeners-in-to-the-harmony-of-life, merely, all are saved, by my Grace.

Prasada, says the Hindu yogi, is not a nature (*prakriti*) but that by which nature and man is saved. No attribute of the Divine being receives such prominence in the *Quran* as mercy—evil there is in the world and evil-doers must receive their due, but mark the contract—"And my mercy encompasseth all beings" says Alla; and this power of grace is not a Semitic doctrine but truly an ancient Indo-Iranian doctrine; you have it in the *Vedas* where the *Varuna pasa*, the noose of

Varuna is unloosed by the grace of *Mitra*, God the friend; you have the *pasa* of man unloosed by *Pasupati*, the Lord of Creation, who uses the Infinite grace of Enlightenment of the refreshed mentality to free man, rather to clear the vision before man, of God.

Prasada is not merely a postulate of metaphysics; it is the place two fingers' breadth below the crown of the head where is felt the grace of the Overshadowing, brooding, personal, God on to whom we (soul-body) are hung as by a thread, *Sutratma*; as pleasant as is sleep calm and refreshing is what the holy commentaries say of *Prasada*. And when at last the individual breaks through the limiting darknesses, to him the Irradiation of that moment, the smile and soul clasp, is in God as well as in Man. We come staggering through the golden light of His Kingdom to be absorbed into His Being.

We are here nearest the deep primitive springs of religion, that sense of dependence or reliance on a greater Being which alone can make us independent of the world. It seems, therefore, that by radical constitution we are not made to carry the whole burden of our lives; if we are to preserve our sanity in moments of uttermost tension we must have some greater power on whom we can

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throw our burden, and we must throw it on Nature or on God, by the acts known as *sharanagati*, *tyaga* and *sannyasa*.

MANTRA—

Devote your thoughts when going to sleep, or when you have leisure, to God as Loving Kindness, at the center of *Prasada*, two fingers (one half inch) below the crown of the head.

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LESSON IX

On Sharanagati

*Budham saranam gaschami
sangham saranam gaschami
dhammam saranam gaschami
Om Mani—Padme Hum.*

chants the ancient Buddhist; thus hath he been taught; thus is the doctrine of *sharanagati* the taking refuge in the Lord, the taking refuge in the Church (*ekklesia*), in the World, the taking refuge in the Law, in the moral order that the Buddhist is convinced governs the world. Translated into religious language, *sharanagati* is the Act of surrender to God.

It is the natural evolvent of the doctrine of *fatalism*, the *other* expression of the fact that one cannot, is not able to do, or finds restriction in the way of doing what one likes; one in doing what he likes encounters the "marginal error," the "unseen factor," the "unaccounted host," by

whatever name it may be called—*Destiny* is its crude name. And it has specially to be noted that “the belief in fate does not seem to be ultimately due to an intellectual conviction that the powers which rule human life and life’s battle are material and blind, but to the practical necessity, if one is going to get one’s work done and maintain one’s reason, of believing that one’s fate is controlled by an over-ruling power. The man *throws off* (*Tyaga*) his cares, even his personal cares on a Power mightier than exploding mine and bursting shell.

Fatalism is *not* a negative creed, it is not the calm beautiful evening of the religion of the cow, but a religion of the warrior; soldiers have to be fatalists otherwise they would be madmen; fatalism has always been a very good antidote to steady men’s nerves in danger. Fatalism was a fighting creed long before the days of the high explosive; it nerved Islam in its tremendous career of conquest, and in its Calvinistic form it put iron in the blood of the Puritan and the Huguenot. One remembers too the faith in his destiny and “star” of the greatest soldier (Napoleon) of modern times. In other words in this strange appearance of faith in predestination in an age which has apparently forgotten that the ancients also were men

and knew enough to have a Word of God to abide by, we seem to have, in however obscure and inverted a form, something which reminds us of Christ's words: "The very hairs of your head are all numbered; hear ye not therefore—seek ye first the kingdom of God," and of Krishna's words in the Gita. Ch. XI.

Herein is the teaching of the ancient Gita—*Anta kale* at the hour of the "End," the fulfillment of life toil, comes God. In times of danger, of the "approaching" *end*, men cry out to God. In many cases they have never been absolutely in earnest before in their lives; they have been brought face to face with death and while there they have *spoken* to God and they never will be quite the same afterwards. This is the ultimate of the religious experience of *Sharanagati*, rather the religious experience that arises out of the surrender that is *sharanagati*. And the surrender is a giving up of all the *kalevara*, all the clogs he had about him such as his possessions, his house and home, his wife and children, his body, and more than all these, of his *soul*, of *all* his Values, of all that he esteemed till then, which become at *that* time *mere* clogs.

This aspect of the religious consciousness of Bhakti is in general awakened by the sheer sense

of helplessness, *sankate ghore*, in danger and need—but it is further stated by the Bhakti Yogins that it does not come to men so much as a refuge in hours of danger as in moments when, if they had to “carry on” as they had to do to endure beyond the limits of human strength, things had to be done which it seemed could not be done. At such times God came into the void and with His coming a new spring of moral energy was opened—that spring which the Text-book of Bhakti Yoga known as *Bhagavata* calls *Krishna*, which the nominal Christians are not able to find in Christ.

To the religious consciousness, it is utterly impossible that so great a thing as life, as we in the days of modern civilization are experiencing it, could end with death. The conviction grows, not merely as a resentment against the sudden break in the delights of life that death causes, the sudden dislocation of the universe by this accident called death, not merely as a protest against the helplessness of the “idea” taught by the cemeteries, and the absolute nothingness that is left of a friend, as a result, say, of an explosion, that to believe in the eternal value of the individual is really difficult, but in the *strangeness* of the *instinct*

that death cannot be the end, for there is else no God.

To nearly all of us it is not that we believe in a future life, not that we know there is a life beyond death, but that this life beyond death is a life in God a life of God. Death here ceases to have any terros; it is the call of God to his forces to abandon their leisure and their sports and turn to that higher better life for them and in Him that is possible *after* death, a life in God, in the Path of God, *Krishna Gati*. Here one abandoning his body, his clogs, meets God, sees him, senses him alone, and thenceforth *lives* in Him. Such a view is against the common teaching of Hell; eternal torment would here be absurd; death is not the end but a junction where one changes carriages. Is there beyond death immortality or future chances for service—this few can see ahead at the moment of death; but the content of the immortality is overwhelmingly impressed on the religious consciousness of the Bhakti Yogi.

It is only by the teaching in the Gita (IX.11) of the great need of man to God, of how very much God is dependent on the human form and the human life-experience for His Purposes, that man gets at a *positive* religion. That man is of great value in God's sight, that He has come down

many a time through the centuries, as Krishna, Budha, Jesus, Mahomed, to tell him so, that God is *close* beside him, (Gita, VII.2) "closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet," his companion, that Man is the solace and refuge of God (*Madasrayah*), is the teaching of the Gita. It further adds that every man is the embodiment of the Purpose (*anta*), the special work that God wants man to do, for which God incarnated in Man; that God desires to use Man's powers, his leadership, organization, popularity, perseverance, personality, all that man is proud of possessing, that it is for God to choose *his* Man and that choice is the moment of fulfillment of purpose, *anta kala*.

Specially does the teaching of Bhakti Yoga present the greatness of a wonderful concept, the concept of *Sharanagati*. The concept is greater than that of the crucifixion of Christ, and the appeal of the Cross, though strong, has *no* effect on the redemptive side, of the teaching it intends to convey. The attraction of the Cross to the warrior in the battle of life is in the main that of a wounded hero, a fellow sufferer in a good cause—but the *sharanagati* of the Bhakti Yogi is the statement of the fact that God *has* surrendered himself to man, has incarnated in him, filled him with

life, informed his thoughts, enthused his thoughts, made *experience* inform into him, so that he may gather the harvest at death at last into his being, God is *not* the fellow-sufferer but *the* sufferer during life of the body during the purposeless dull life that goes on somehow, with a little of this and a little of that, of the life that is gone beyond recall by nightfall, that is the life of the most today.

Ah, could we but connect the symbols the great ones have given us since the time of the ancient *Gathas* and *Vedas* with the knowledge that is growing today, that has overgrown the dead creeds of the religions of the world, the knowledge that fills and overflows the hearts of men today, what a great Empire could we not have created, what a great empire it shall be that we shall create hereafter. There *must* be more known about sacrifice and suffering, known *now* by men than since the days of the ancient *Yajnas* and *yasnas*, than *any* past time, but is it not all isolated, disconnected, and have there not been attempts to hide it out of human knowledge?

Yes, God is the help of Sacrifice; with him is the usefulness (*adhi*) of Sacrifice (*Yajna*); with Him is Destiny (*daiva*) the usefulness of that destiny that appears to us to cause our sorrow,

that destiny that the Islam calls *kismet* and the Jain Budhist *Karma*; He is the friend, useful to every, tiny life-cell that attempts to live together into the body, to partake of the joint experience (*adhi-bhoota*) and most especially is He realized in the experience of the *Prayana-kala*, the time when One leaves all that he has or is, as in death, trance, *sanyasa*.

This is the tenet that nowhere is Life stronger than at the moment of Death, the peremptory going-forth (*Prayana*); it is stated not as a paradox but as a matter of experience of men throughout the religions, throughout the centuries. In Budhism the last thought, the thought at death was believed to have a determining effect on the individual, and the Hindu has followed the idea out into his religious philosophical creed and argument. The absurdness of taking the Gita, verse 8 (*yam yam va api smaran bhavam tyajati ante kalevaram—tam tam eva eti—sada tad bhava bhavita*) has not been fully followed out and the fault is, of course, with hasty readers. It is not that the last thought at death is to be followed out in another life but that the last thought in life is a collective thought, the unfulfilled portion of the Purpose in life that will be working out its fulfillment in the beyond after death.

What goes forth at death is the Greater Being, the Collect of the Beings that have come-to-be in the body, the *Adhi Bhoota*; it is the lord of its destiny from the moment of death, *adhi daiva*; it is the sacrifice, *adhiyajna*, the crucified Christ transfigured from glory to glory; it is a Glory that *has* been perceived, that *can* be perceived, that the Soul or spirit *perceives* after death, the glory of the Soul that staggers into the friendly bosom of God, ever more than half ready to meet it more than half way beyond the veil (mist or *maya*) between appearance and reality, the veil at the threshold of the fourth dimension.

Says an army officer: "The comradeship with death is the most potent but not the only circumstance of the battle field which alters the spiritual balance. The limbo of the soldier's vaguer feeling is intensely colored by a sense of unspeakable impotence in the face of gigantic forces of destruction. Nowhere as in a great army does a man's littleness and unimportance stare on him so startlingly. Nowhere as on a battle field is there such evidence of the powerlessness of the mightiest human organization to protect his own small individuality. A millimetre's deflection in the laying of a gun is the difference between life and death to him. He knows how a shell will burst

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to pieces between two men, blowing one to pieces yet leaving the other unhurt and amazed. He has crouched in holes, listened to the hum of a thousand unseen menaces under the placid stars—what eats into his soul is the knowledge that this violence is blind. Chance, the soldiers God is once more the God of battles who clothes himself with the storm; he is not the judge of righteousness or wrong, not the friend of the fatherless nor the widow's protector, not holy nor just nor good but simply the controller of all the forces of nature that burst away from the grasp of man; the Lord of fate and the master of Life and death—and this the soldier finds out only at the Last moment (*anta k̥ala*), when having thought till then how powerless God was, albeit he was kind, he found Him mighty to save the moment he was beckoned as at Death."

This chapter applies specially to the Hero, *Dhira*, which term includes the wise man, the man who is not afraid to meet death, and to such a hero the simple virtues and truths that are the mainspring of every religion are given true place in his inner life. Loving one's neighbor as one-self, unselfishness, humility in the true sense of self-forgetting and gentleness, all these the hero sees; the possibilities in self sacrifice, the need for

God, the certainty born of close acquaintance that death is not the end, all these are more than a part of the hero's uninterrupted awareness; unselfishness and fellowship especially the fellowship of God (as the *sakha*) he knows all about, in his own way.

It is a revelation to many what a live thing God is for to live men; they have come to feel, partly through our time-worn creeds and ceremonies, partly through our special garbs and vestures and churches and set modes of worship, and part through their own shortsightedness that this religion in a church is not necessary for normal life and so they have ignored it, just as they have ignored all types of current exoteric religion, just as they will in the very near hereafter abandon all current types of new thought, theosophy, spiritualism, esoteric religion. The man who has known God has no more care for saving his soul, no more care for anything else than *saving the world* for God. The cry of the Bhakti Yogi is

SARVE JANAH SUKHIṆA BHAVANTU!
(I live that all may be Happy; I die leaving all Happier),



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LESSON X

Sufi, Bhakti-as-among-the-Persians and its Hinduism

Copious literature is available in the writings of Omar Khayyam, the divine immortal Omar, in Hafiz and Saadi, in Jami and Nisami and Jal-aluddin Rumi on what in another tongue would be erotic symbology, eroticism parading as religious madness. But even the westerns have not been mistaken as to the language; thereof Max Muller writes: "When we read some of the *sufi* enraptured poetry, we must remember that the *sufi* poets use a number of expressions which have a recognized meaning in their language. Thus *sleep* signifies meditation; *perfume*, hope of divine favour; *gales* are illapses of grace, *kisses* and *embraces* the raptures of piety. *Idolators* are not infidels but really men of the pure faith. *Wine* is forbidden by Mahomed, but with the Sufi *wine* means spiritual knowledge. *Beauty* is the perfection of deity; *tresses* are the expansion of his glory; the *lips* of

the beloved mean the inscrutable mysteries of His essence; the *down on the cheeks* stands for the world of spirits; a *black mole* for the point of indivisible unity." (p. 349 "Theosophy or Psychological Religion"—Max Muller).

Whatever it may be, their language is a substitute for expression of what the Sufi Lords could not express better; these phrases stand in human experience, the *Chit inbam* (Tamil) for what they felt in their great *Per inbam* (Tamil) and all that we can do is to find out in the experience of Bhakti Yoga, the experiences described in this symbology. Taking "sleep" which as you can see they have tried to identify with meditation, you can get that stage of sleep where one is conscious, conscious that he is asleep but awake in the bosom of the great Power of silence, which is something more than Yogaic sleep, where the thoughts of the world only are still on the margin, *prapancha chintam pari marjayanti*.

Take again the word "perfume," we find its equivalent or rather pre-type in the *Isa Upanishad*—"Isha avasym idam sarvam"—the whole world is rendered fragrant by God—God is again *Vasudeva* the fragrance of the world—every life is but the wandering about of God to secure the fragrance of experience therefrom, says the Gita

and the Upanishads; God is the *vasana* that makes us re-incarnate, that makes us live, that makes us die, says the Secret teaching; all beings get fragrant by God; it is for that God incarnates in man to render man fragrant.

As says the Upanishad, when one realizes that he is the one undivided Greatness called *Vasudeva* and is firm in that view, he does become a *Bhikshu*, a wanderer and beggar *begging the fragrance everywhere*. To recognize God, to be aware of the very scent of God is to be drawn by it most powerfully, so powerfully, that nothing else attracts him; he rejects everything else, he abandons everything else; his *sharanagati*, surrender becomes an utter renunciation, not merely the renunciation in Sufism that is the right use of all powers given to man, but the renunciation far transcending that advised by Jesus; in his "if thou wilt be perfect go and ^{*}sell what thou hast."

Of *sharanagati*, *tyaga* is another stage, the third being *sannyasa*; *tyaga*, renunciation it need be assumed as it is, too easily, is in western teaching not merely wholly concerned with renunciation of that vacuous, nebulous nothing called *ego*, nor renunciation of a difficult surrounding, nor an escape from effort of all sort into an exalted vacuity, but is the unfailing reminder that poverty is no

grace, a living protest against materialism and the soul's bondage to things. *Tyaga* is loving self-forgetfulness in the service of the God known to yourself, made the one all determining principle of life from which all precepts follow, sacrifice and service.

In this life of fragrance, *Vasudeva*, recognize thou that bondage is the bondage of the fragrances, attractions (*Vasanas*) that become later on evil smells; and release is, for the herd, release from the evil of the smell, from the evil that the passing fragrance left behind. Learn thou to avoid all attractions, learn thou the way of silence, the ways of avoidance, the *via negativa*. Learn thou then to adopt the greater fragrances of *maitri*, friendliness; *karuna*, compassion; *mudita*, joyousness; these are the fragrances that soil not. Leave these again, when the stage thereof comes on, having worked them out to the full by meeting God in that form, as the Friend, as the Lord of Compassion, as the Lord of Reverberant Joy. Become thou not exultant but calm; equable to the Divine struggle in all Beings, become thou but a reflection of the Thought that you see mirrored before you. And above all rest content in What remains of the content of experience.

To realize God is to be filled with the desire to serve him and the way of this service is neither to pull up one's life by the roots, nor to continue it unchanged in all its details unchanged but to turn it about, to turn everything to his way—*mey kartavyani* says the Gita—Do It unto God.

Between God and the Bhakta Yogi there is no other way, there is nothing else but self-surrender and the ending of self. "Give up what is before, give up what is behind, give up what is between, when thou goest to the other shore of existence; if thy mind is altogether free thou wilt not enter again into travail and decay," says the *Dharma-pada*, a Buddhist treatise. This is the utmost of *tyaga*, a stage whose finality is to be found in the Gita teaching—abandon thou every rule of life; abandon thou everything else but Me and come unto Me, I shall release you from all sin—says the Lord Krishna.

Here, then, arises the eroticism of the symbology of the Persians, a symbology not unknown to India. Runs Bilvamangala the first devotee of Sri Padmanabha:

*"Anganam anganam antare Madhavo
Madhavam madhavams chantare angana
Itham prakalpita mandale madhyagah
Sanjagou venuna devaki nandanah."*

In the heart of every form of beauty was God dancing, God singing in the wilderness; in every wilderness of the divine Honey-bee (*Madhava*) of experience (rapture) was the Form of Beauty unparalleled—thus did the world appear transformed, singing to the music of God, dancing and piping to the dance.

There is quoted another ballad: "Friend," says Sita the love of Rama, "I fearfully contemplate on the grub metamorphosing into the butterfly." "Why," asks her companion maid: "Because," says Sita, "I may by constant brooding over Rama turn into Rama." "Turn into Rama? What harm," asked the companion, "if thou and Rama become One, doth thou not yearn for it?" Says Sita, "Then there is no enjoyment for me with Rama, for I shall become Rama himself." "Fear not," says the maid laughingly, "for Rama similarly situated like thyself shall have by constant brooding over thee become Sita." God does not only meet you and become one with you, but the meeting is so intimate that you are not aware in the Divine Wedding as to who is God and who yourself. And in trying to expand this subject one can get only into a maze of contradictions.

These contradictions and apparent trivialities meet us throughout not only Christian mystic

writings but through all mystical writings; for where they have not had a good dictionary and have not accepted the standards of thought set up by the current leaders of thought they have had to fall on the common language and explain themselves by the use of negatives—their experiences are not any that we know out here, and hence the use of negatives.

Referring to the erotic symbology of the Persians, writes Hadland Davis: "It may be questioned that if the earthly object of love was a mere passing shadow of God the man who loved that object was equally insignificant. And again how can God be the ALL-one when, according to the Sufi thesis, He divided himself into creation? The part is not equal to the whole. But these are questions that can easily be answered. The stars shine in the sky and in the bosom of the sea without diminution; let the sea pass away and the star shadows pass away too; but the stars are still there. So when the world shall pass away it will be the only fading of innumerable shadows we call humanity; God will still be there and we shall still be there because we shall go along with Him."

In the symbology of wine we meet with common ground in Hinduism's *Shakta Tantra* and in

the Persian or western mystics; what the immortal Omar says is, quite Hinduism:—

*Dost thou know why WINE I prize
He who drinks all, ILL-defies
And can awhile throw off the thrill
Of self; the God we worship—all.*

You have the symbology of wine in the Vedas, in their Soma; you have it in the Haoma of the Parsis, the Drink of nectar that is for the Gods! But quite clear is the note of the Kularnava, the leading *shākta* work on the real honey or drink. Drink is of the nectar of that experience that results from going along mentally, consciously, in the wake of life, the lady mother (*mata*, *atma*) from the basal, coccygeal plexus nerve center up to the crown of the head where are the lotus feet of God, again and again. It is this wine that is Honey; others who drink are drunkards.

Always inculcating the religion of Healthy Mindedness the Bhakti Yoga of the *Shākta Tantra* says with Ecclestes: "Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy; drink thy wine with a merry heart; let thy garments be always bright—let thy head lack no ointment; live joyfully all thy days of vanity." Hence the reference to the need of fish, flesh, dancing and music, drink and women in the *Shākta Tantra*. Fish, says the *Kularnava*, consists in the

angling for the fish of the senses roving about under the protection of the big mother (mind) fish and the conversion of the Values of this fish makes one a *Meana Ashi*—others are fish eaters. He who can get above the judgment subordinating itself to good and evil, by right use, by full use of the sword of knowledge, cutting off all doubts and divisions in the faith and will, all *Assradha*, and can devote himself to the rare otherness of Beatitude, he is the *Flesh eater*, not these cannibals, others of the earth earthly. Dancing and music to the great *Shakta* are only for controlling the mind, for sealing it, so that it may devote itself to God, in the seal called *Chinmudra*. So closely have you to bind yourself up in the surrender to God that really are you bound with God—and *Mudra*, it is needless to say, is not the gesture and the oddity of ritual that we mistake for sacrament. And as for *sexual bliss* (*Mihuna*), what Bliss can be greater, truer than the marriage with God, with the Peace that quells all forces, that reverberates joy, the Bliss of the God-in-the-Heart, uniting himself with every form of the cell life that goes to the make up of man, the Bliss that informs every cell-life with its fulsome ~~grandeur~~ with its overbrimming joy.

The sufi who sets out to seek God is called a *salik*, a traveller; he advances by slow degrees along the path to the goal of union with reality, *fana fil haqiqat*. There are seven stages in the sufi theory; repentance, abstinence, renunciation, poverty, patience, trust-in-God, satisfaction. After the traveller has progressed along the Path he is raised to the Higher planes of *marifat*, gnosis, and truth.

The sufi gives a different meaning to renunciation; with him it is the right use of all the powers given by God to man and beyond the above seven stages the *sufis* teach three more, *fana*, the total effacement of the self, so much that the adept is merged in the divine presence; this involves *baqua* the continuance of his real existence. The ultimate aim of the *sufis* was to continue in a state of *baqua*, eternal life actuated and motivated by the instinctive desire for unification called in their language, *liqua*. *Lahut* is the next stage, where he remembers nothing but God, and God begins to work through him till he becomes devoted to the service of humanity as God's work—the stage is that of Mahomed Rasul Alla, *mujaddid* and *nabi*; one of these stages is called *Boruz*, *avatar*.

OM MANI—PAD-ME HUM

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LESSON XI

On Ananda

Cultivate joyfulness therefore in all your amusements; when joyful break out into silent and inward praise of the joy within you; work silently and joyously. And this cultivation of joyfulness is taught by means of auto-suggestions in what are called *Svanubhuti Vakyas* or *Vibhuti vakyas* in the Upanishads and in the Bhagavad Gita.

The self absorbed in the orison of quiet or its analogous concentration passes over the limit of its status and slides into a still ecstatic trance with its outward characteristics of rigid limbs, of cold and depressed respiration; such is ecstasy, *Turya*, state, *savikalpa samadhi*, the Hindus call it.

An ecstatic state is really nothing else than a contemplation of a special kind with a special psycho-physical make up; it is not possible to get at the point exactly where deep contemplation assumes the ecstatic form; true ecstasy is not a

malady like the entrancement of disease, but the extreme form of a state which must be classed among the ordinary accidents of life.

Says James: "Although the oncoming of the mystical states may be facilitated by preliminary, voluntary operations, as by fixing the attention or going through certain bodily performances, yet when the characteristic sort of consciousness has once set in, the mystic feels as if his own will were in abeyance and indeed feels as if he were grasped and held by a superior power. This latter peculiarity connects mystical states with certain definite phenomena of secondary or alternative personality such as prophetic speech, automatic writing or the mediumistic trance."

It would we think be best to quote that great thinker Nietzsche. Says Nietzsche in "Ecce Homo" on his experiences of ecstasy. "There is an ecstasy so great that the immense strain of it is sometimes relaxed by a flood of tears during which one's steps involuntarily rush and anon involuntarily lag. There is the feeling that one is utterly out of hand with the very distinct consciousness of an endless number of thrills and titillations descending to one's toes; there is a depth of happiness in which the most painful and gloomy parts do not act as antitheses to the rest but are pro-

duced as required as necessary shades of color in such an overflow of light. There is a constant instinct for rhythmic relations which embraces a whole world of forms, length the need of a wide embracing rhythm is almost the measure of all inspiration, a sort of counterpart to its pressure and tension. Everything happens quite involuntarily as if in a tempestuous outburst of freedom, of absoluteness of power and divinity. The involuntary nature of the similies and figures is the most remarkable thing; one loses all perception of what is emergency, imagery and metaphor; everything presents itself as the readiest and simplest and truest means of expression. It actually seems as if all things came to one and offered themselves as similies."

As says Paul in 2 Cor. III.18: "But we all beholding as in a mirror or reflecting as a mirror the glory of the Lord are transformed into the same image from glory to glory."

It is a Bliss that cannot be correctly described. Ask a musician to explain a symphony in plain everyday English and he cannot do it though he carry the Oxford dictionary in his head. He can have the music played for us but could never convey it in ordinary language, however willing he might be to help and we to listen.

But while we in reading the writings of mystics, Christian, Moslem or Hindu have to read through their technology, in the *Upanishads*, the stages of meeting God, of entering into God, *Sanyasa*, of being permeated with him, *aradhoota*, of becoming one with Him, *Hamsa*, are treated with scientific precision of language, albeit that language be rather pedantic.

Read the *Kundika Upanishad*: "Before me in the ocean of undivided Joy, in many ways the waves of the ocean of the world, *lave* me; whirled up into foam as they are by the wind of the Tempest of appearance (*maya*). But I do remain witness of all, undivided in my will, is my Awareness of the Truth; naught of an overlord do I recognize; nor do I recognize the I, nor anything of mine."

The "I" in him has been wiped out *long ago*. He has gone far beyond the stage of the King Janaka who could but state that while Mithila of which he was Emperor was burning, nothing of him, burned up at all. Janaka was only a *Jivanmukta*; some say that he was the *Vaideha* as being the father of Sita (*Vaidehi*)—that is to say he alone could be a *Vaidehamukta* who could keep himself independent of body and home, who could realize himself as already saved, while in the Body.

He alone is the creator, the King of creative mentality (*Janaka*). The Bhakta Yogi is different, is another type than Janaka; he has to surrender the *Vaidehi* to Sri Rama; that is his resemblance to Janaka—that he is prepared to surrender even the status of the Yogi to the need of God (*Rama*).

The surrender does not disturb his *Ananda*—not even when he surrenders every cell in himself *Loka Sangraham Api*—for he surrenders himself to God voluntarily, from every cell of his body, from every pore of his body. Every pore becomes titillant with joy, with the outflowing of the Soul within, of the ego into the self of which it is a facet, of the soul on to the God of which it is but a spark. Horrification is a particular, an extreme feature of the religious bliss—of the Bliss that at first intoxicates, *madayanti*, that perfumes and overpowers, *vineohayanti*, following which is Horrification *Roamanche*, and finally makes the seer, enjoyer, truly Blessed, *Kritarthayanti*.

Let us state that this *Ananda* is unique, in Bhakti Yoga. It is very hard to limit this to a *Sat-chid-Ananda*, as some would. There is no thing such as *sat*, existence—for in *Ananda* there is no *separate existence*, such as the term *sat* would indicate. There is not even any sense of value, taking that to be the final meaning of *sat*; there is

no abiding "entity" whatsoever in the sense of "Ananda," The *Ananda*, Joy, alone is the *value* in the concept (*sat*); at times the Joy alone remains irrespective of the enjoyer (*chid*). We are here, as usual, at a loss for words—for we in analyzing the Joy find it to be utterly irrespective of the enjoyer and the object which gives rise to the enjoyment. There is not a trace (*chit*) of any separateness in the enjoyment—that is the uniqueness of Ecstasy and Rapture the true content of their value. Anything can at any time, anyhow provoke the enjoyment—it is not necessary that the enjoyment should have a basis (*Sat*) or result (*Chit*). And in this sense, often misunderstood by people who repeat the slogan of *Sat-Chid-Ananda*, remains yet to be carefully realized.

In innumerable quotations from the Vedas can we find the statement *Anandam Brahma*, God is Bliss—Greatness, true Greatness is Bliss. Know thou, says the *Brihad Aranyaka Upanishad*; Know thou Bliss to be greatness, says the *Taittiriya Upanishad*. God is the essence of things the underlying value obtaining which one becomes Blissful (*Taittiriya Upanishad*). And again it says: "Were not this our environment all refulgent Bliss, the Bliss of Life, what of life is there, what can live?"

As says the Bhagavata, XII. 12-51:—

“That is delightful, that is savoury, that is novel
That to the Mind is ever a constant Feast
That of the mortal sucks up the sea of sorrow
That praises sung to the Best, the world renowned.”

Which we may compare with Browning
(adapted):

I find earth not grey but rosy
Heaven not grim but fair of hue
Do I stoop? I pluck a posy
Do I stand and start? Yes *it is God*.

Bliss (*Ananda*) is the goal and love (*Rasa*) is the means; for love is the Master Principle of the universe. *Ananda* means both love and Bliss, God is love, God is Bliss. The quest of God is Love, true love, is truly blissful.

It is very interesting to refer to the Dravidian saints than whom there never have been greater Bhakta Yogis. We quote here only from the Vaishnavites (Vishnu-symbol-followers) among these, for the sake of brevity. According to them the soul in its self surrender into the Bliss of God takes up the stages defined vaguely by the terms (1) *ananya arha seshatva*—By God alone appropriate, (2) *Ananya Sharanetva*, to him alone surrenderable, (3) *anvaya dhrititva*—with him alone as the Refuge, console, (4) *Vyatireka*

adhriti tva—without Him, restless and disconsolate, (5) *Tad Eka Bhogatva*—By Him alone enjoyable, and (6) *Tad Eka Nirvahyatva*—By Him alone rescueable.

You have here a classification that is the Highest aspect of the Sufi classification. They have been very wrongly compared to the four Graces of Interior Prayer of Poulain, which are quite elementary stages, e. g. (1) The incomplete mystic union or the Prayer of Quiet, (2) The full or the semi ecstatic union or prayer of union, (3) the ecstatic union or ecstasy, (4) The transforming or deifying union or the spiritual marriage of the soul with God. In the Dravidian concept of the spiritual wedding *has* taken place, and the Holy wedded life is but going on. It has begun, it shall not, please God, ever end. But Christian Mysticism still lacks those expressions that we see by millions expressive of the Hindu Bhakti Yogis Fulness of Experience of the Divine Bliss.

It is only in this Religion of Bliss, in this *Ananda*, the Happiness of God that *can* be ordered by oneself for Himself like a chop in the restaurant, by Bhakti Yoga, that Science, Western Science can throw off her fetters of the planetary standpoint; it is only here that ethics transcend the narrow experience of the single ego-centric

life. It is only here that evolution appears as a Development of Beauty in Beauty, in variety of scintillation; it is only here that the Bhakta Yogi finds no arrest of his movement towards an ever eludable goal. It is here we gain a glimpse of an ultimate candescence, where religion and philosophy, science and argument have to fuse into one and become infused with *Ananda*; where energy becomes life, and life love, and love again Joy the source of energy.

The Bhakti Yogi has naught to do; nothing of effort; he has not even to ring the changes, he has not even to visualize the apotheosis of the conquering soul, but sees the transfigured man in the God developing out of Man, radiant in Bliss. The word holy means nothing to him; the word Bliss *everything*.

ANANDAM BRAHMA

BHAKTI YOGA

LESSON XII

The Results of Bhakti Yoga

It is well to recognize that the abnormal and highly sensitive type of mind which we call Bhakti Yogic does frequently produce strange modifications of the physical organism with which it is linked. It is likely enough that where nerves and organs suffer under a stress to which they have not become adapted, a "spirit" more highly organized than its bodily home should be able to impose strange conditions on the flesh. There is danger, therefore, along the path. .

Sexual Purity is Essential. And the chief danger lies in the inter-relation between the Pineal Gland and the sexual organs. Exercises of Yoga provoke both the pineal gland and sexual gland secretions; especially they intensify the latter. Tension during Yoga is very great in the sexual region and if very great care is not exercised in closing up all ways in which sex energy is wasted,

madness and death result. Celibacy, bodily purity, the yogin takes precautions to keep.

That is why the erotic symbolologies used by the Masters have not succeeded in warding off the danger that the unprepared student is subject to in Bhakti Yoga praxis. Bhakti Yoga, it may be stated, opens the "pineal door" and has the peculiar anaphrodisiac quality of re-developing the divine eye, the Pineal gland—where the son of man and the son of God meet—there is either surrender or madness. In the latter case death would be the balm that can save the Bhakta.

The phase of Bhakti called Contemplation, in its end, is a very brief act. The very greatest of contemplatives have been unable to sustain the brilliance of the awful vision for even a second. And none do tell us in exact and human language what they obtained in the momentary mergence in God. Rapture, which is complete entrancement, temporarily disorganizes and may permanently injure the nervous system. It is an accident, not an implicit of mystical experience, an indication of disharmony between the subject's psychophysical make up and his transcendental powers.

The sharpness and violence of rapture leave considerable disorder behind it. But this spiritual storm entrances the vitality of those who expe-

rience it and makes them more living than before. It occurs as an earthquake, if the expression be permitted. It is a mingling of terror and rapture difficult to describe and as a general rule it completely discharges the energy of the adept leaving him weaker than an attack of malaria would do; but if the practice has been right, this soon passes off and the experience has this advantage: that one is far less troubled with minor phenomena than before.

The efforts of Bhakti Yoga develop the divine Vision. "Say unto mankind: Look not on the Self existent with this eye, ask for another eye," says Desatir. The other eye is the eye called *phala netra* in its earlier stages, and *trinetra* in its later stages, the eye of the Pincal Gland which is both eye, ear and door. And the divine vision was given not only to Arjuna in the *Mahabharata*, but to Sanjaya, Dhritarashtra, the sages and those who had the wealth of piety. God presented them all the Divine Vision.

It is however necessary to remember that there are four kinds of vision; the first is seen as in sleep and by sleep is meant that state when the subtle fumes of the food mounting to the brain overpower external perceptions at the time of repose. Whatever is beheld there is the first stage. The

stage beyond this dignity is suspending the connection between soul and body which is as follows—when divine grace is communicated from on high; and the transports arising there from lock up eternal perceptions; whatever is beheld in that state is called *Revelation*. Next (third) is that state in which divine grace, being communicated without the senses being overpowered, transports the person for the time being into the world of reality; whatever he beholds in that state is called *Mai-na*, the Reality. The state (fourth) higher than that is the power of the soul to quit the body and to return to it.

Thus have the ancient Chaldees classified the aspects of the Divine Vision taught by the Bhakti Yoga. On the *Quran*, talking of Revelation the second stage in the above, says M. Ali: “Alla speaks to man in three ways and makes known his will thereby—*wahy*, the inspired word which enters into the hearts of men, suggestions directly made like visions. We have a type of this in the *Sruti* of sages, the Voice of the Silence, the Bhagavad Gita and every other revelation. (2) Alla speaks from behind a veil—the Voice is heard but the speaker is not seen. Of the God behind the veil we have the statement of the *Maya* teaching as it is given in the ancient Vedas, where, as

in the Parsi scripture, *maya* means power, wondrous power, like *maga* of the *magi*. *Maya* is here derived from mist, *mih*—whence the term *moodha*, enveloped; it is the *Tiraskarini*, the *hijab* or *araf* of the Moslems, the veil between the dimensions, 3rd and 4th. God, of course, can always be heard—for he is the *Shabda Brahma*; he is the *Gita*; he is the flowing Ganga, the river of mercy and compassion; He is the Singing silence *Gayatri*, he is Govinda, the Shepherd, the *Gotama* (Budhist), the secret one, *Gomata*, the seer (Jain)."

In the third way an apostle or angel is chosen by Alla to deliver his message to the person to whom he desires to speak. The apostle is, of course, the "Intuitive-messenger—Deva" the bird-whisper into the ear, the conviction that the message may be accepted as a judgment to abide by.

On the side of the neophyte, there are the four ways of receiving the vision of God; according to the Talmud, out of the four masters who entered the garden of delight Ben Asai looked and lost his sight; Ben Zoma looked and lost his reason; Ben Acher made depredations in the plantation (he mixed up the whole and failed). But Ben Akiba came out in peace. For the experience of the Garden of God is often times sudden—he whom God chooses shall meet Him and mayhap,

as at death, may be quite unprepared for the rapture of the meeting; he loses his body, or he loses his mind, or he loses all that he valued—or all that he valued are *bereft* from him, leaving his ego still dazed and in terror at the danger of the great crossing.

The Holy Guardian angel leaves the exempt adept at the brink of the Abyss—this is the only terror of the crossing—it has been repeatedly referred to in the Upanishads—that Braham is a greater terror like a drawn sword. It is overpowering fear, all compelling terror that here meets the individual and for that he cannot be in any sense prepared—it is the supreme test, in a sense.

In the Divine Vision, *Visvaroopā Darsana* of the Bhagavad Gita, the body of Arjuna being left in a cataleptic condition, Arjuna's soul (soul meaning, of course, the inner body *Para Deha* or *Dehi*) was extracted out (not so fully as in death) to be united with the spirit (Krishna) that overshadowed Him. The state was one of rapture. Science explains this rapture called *Hrisheekesa* by the Hindu Yogis. The observed stability of our body, its constancy of outline, is due to the play of imponderable forces vast in comparison to the size of the particles on which they act. In this

view this body is a kind of mist from which there is the possibility of extracting a finer kind of mist, and doing so in a short time and repeatedly with a nearly permanent possibility of restoring it to its former place. And this is significant: the force of cohesion which holds the atoms of the body together is almost certainly of electrostatic origin.

“Transport comes on by one sole act of Gods majesty wrought in the Innermost part of the soul with such swiftness that it is as if the higher part thereof were carried away, and as if the soul were leaving the body.”

In the induced trance-rapture of the Bhakti Yogi, what happens is that in the outpouring of the soul toward God there is the *outpouring* of the inner body which is the soul, from its sheath the body, *isheekam cha yatha munjat*, as the grass from its sheath—thus doth Krishna separate the soul from Arjuna and show it to him in the moment of the *Visvaroopā Darshana*.

The Adepts *could* clothe their own or any other person's astral double with the appearance of the Higher ego (the luminous self, *Taijasi*), or Augeioides and confabulate with it. This is what was meant by union with Deity, says H. P. Blavatsky.

Though the whole of the Gita is an act of confabulation with the Deity, *Samvada*, till the *Visvaroopā Darshana* such confabulation has been internal—man still dualized has been talking to *man*, whom later on he finds to be *deity*; not the *deity* of the cults, but God incarnated in himself, God the reverberant Joy of the *Svanubhuti*.

Such a *samvada*, between man and his God ready to meet him, doth transcend the veil between time and space; either it is God that unclothes time, leaving off the appearance of space and form, or it is Man that tears the veil off to find himself before himself—a terror to perceive, a terror of the Mirror where the Otherness is perceived—man is being here wrenched away or separated from the totality of the Self, which is still placed before him—man beholds here the universe that he is, the universe that he has not been aware of, the universe that oftentimes overpowered him, that latterly entrallled him, not his universe but *the* universe called God, because that was the best term they could invent.

Says H. P. Blavatsky: "It is from the *Hiranyagarbha* (unconscious) that the theurgist can provide the Substance necessary for the appearance of certain lofty presences. In the rare cases when the presence of a tangible and visible

spirit was required the theurgist had to furnish the weird apparition with a portion of his own "flesh and blood," and from the emanation an aerial body is formed (it being necessary for those who perform the ceremony to abstain from all animal food)."

We have this in the *Bali* to the cell-lives in nature of Hindu ritual, a Sacrament which strengthens them; we have it in another sense in the incense and burnt offering of the Moslems and the Jews. The Moslems, albeit they worship no idols, still incorporate the use of incense in their *nawaz*, prayers. The reason as we have seen is the fact that God Himself is a fragrance, the fragrance of the world that enchants; but the more intimate reason would be the power of the incense mingling with the incense of the mystics, outpourings in Bhakti Yoga to call up the Greater Presences, the Beings in Light beyond the spectrum, in sound beyond the octave, in taste beyond the six tastes, in forms beyond human ideations, to respond to the sacrifice of the Bhakti Yogi.

There are those that think that cremation is based on this concept of offering up the body via smoke and fire up to the God whose purpose it came to fulfill, the fire that it kept going, the fire that was the Bhakti, purpose of the life left behind,

the life to be entered on after death, after initiation as by the *Hrishikēsa* rite, described in the *Viśvarūpa Darśana*, the divine vision of the Bhagavad Gita.

Says Madame H. P. B.—

Just as thought objectivizes the personality on the astral waves (ether) similarly to a face impressed on the sensitive plate of the camera, the energy of thought governs the production of forms.

“The wide distinction that obtains between the adept and the ordinary man must be borne in mind; the adept will use his *mayavi rūpa* but the ordinary man does not, except in very rare cases. This form of Illusion (*Mayavi Rupa*) created for use in each particular instance has quite enough of the Adept’s mind to accomplish its purposes (*Kriyasakti*); the ordinary man merely creates a thought Image whose properties and powers are at the time wholly unknown to him. To project this ethereal body at no matter what by distance; to render it more objective and tangible by condensing over its fluidic form the waves of the parent essence is the *great* secret of the Adept magician.”

It happens in Bhakti Yoga that the outpouring of the Soul makes up a complex thought form, often taken for the Deity. This thought form

gradually grows and its growth is stated by Jesus in His "He must increase, I must decrease."— Bhakti Yoga would have no meaning if the content of value of the Bhakti Yogi be not *increased* by the practice.

Says the Bhakti Yogi: If for any reason you are personally unable to give them (the life cells in you) that firm government and vital inspiration they need, you must get it by *Sanyasa*, attaching yourself closely to a larger organism, so closely even that the amalgamation of your two personalities is of all things a moment of the most supreme bliss.

Thus doth Arjuna surrender himself to the Rapture of the Divine Vision, surrender Himself to that Greatness that he saw and played before him.

And it happens as, says H. P. B.: "The seventh aspect of the individual aura is the faculty of assuming the form of its body and becoming the radiant, the Luminous Augocides. It is thus, strictly speaking, which at times becomes the form called *Mayavi Rupa*, the body formed at will by the adept, the body he uses as a vehicle of consciousness when his presence is needed away from the place at which he is residing in the physical.

It is not permanent but is formed at will when needed."

Did Krishna exercise this faculty during the Divine Vision of the Gita? We are not told, but such a hypothesis would take it for granted that Krishna was merely the Initiator and not the other Part of Man.

Again says H. P. B.: "This is the first letter of the great mystery of Being not the existence of an aura common to all objects and by the clairvoyant, but this *splendour* of *manas* this body of the spiritual soul, its vehicle in which it dwells always on the Higher planes enduring through the life cycles of the *Manvantraraic* round."

The Individual Ego owing to its essence and nature is immortal throughout the (*Kalpa*) with a form that prevails through a *manvantara*. This is the *sutratma* the Immortal Monadship called also the *Anandamaya Kosa*.

To dwell consciously in the auric body, Form of Bliss (*Anandamayakosa*), is to be one with God. Plotinus had been united with God six times during his life. So, too, throughout the ages we find now and then men who have succeeded more or less in uniting themselves with God, as the expression goes. We have it in the

Quaran in "The Ascension of the Prophet" on which says M. Ali:—

"There has been a difference of opinion among the learned as to whether the Holy Prophet's ascension was bodily or spiritual. It is quite true that he was not asleep; that he was in a vision though not in a dream, but at the same time it was not a corporal ascension. He was actually carried to the Holy presence, he was shown great wonders, his outward condition was to human seeming one of utmost helplessness and he was shown that a great future lay before him."

The *Mahabharata* mentions three kinds of entry of one soul into another soul. Sulabha overpowering Janaka's Bhava enters into Him and holds conversation with him there; Vipula enters into Ruchi's form and while there Ruchi's consciousness is guided by Vipula's overpowering direction. Thirdly, where Vidura on parting with his body enters into Yudhishtira and mingles his *dharma* with Yudhishtira's thenceforth, Vidura's body dies but cannot be burnt.

This stage of Bhakti Yoga, *Yogam Aisvaram*, lasts from a few seconds a flash to several hours, during which time the theurgist is that overshadowing God himself; hence he becomes endowed with relative omniscience and omnipotence; with

such an *Avatara* the hypostatical condition may last during a whole life. In the case of initiates, not yet *Jivamuktas*, *theopneusty* when in full sway results for the high adept in a full recollection of everything seen, heard or sensed; for the less perfect it will end only in a partial, indistinct remembrance; while the beginner has to face in the first period of his psychic experiences a mere confusion followed by a rapid and finally complete oblivion of mysteries seen in trance.

This is specially referred to in the Initiations of the *Shakta Tantra*.

In the Mysteries men were taught to escape from their bodies.

The soma (AUMN) is used to assist this escape from the physical plane. The real property of the true *soma* is to make a new man of the Initiate after he is reborn; namely once that he begins to live in his astral body. The partaker of the *soma* finds himself both linked to his eternal body and yet away from it in his spiritual form. The latter freed from the former soars for the time being in the ethereal regions becoming virtually as one of the Gods and yet preserving in his physical brain the memory of what he sees and learns namely God.

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God, then, is the natural appellation for the supreme reality, the higher part of the universe; We and God have business with each other and in opening ourselves to his influence our deepest destiny is fulfilled; The universe, says James, at those parts of it which our personal being constitutes, takes a turn genuinely for the worse or the better in proportion as each one of us fulfills or evades God's demands; God is real since he produces real effects. Explaining the ancient sacrifice, says Wells: The believer owes all his being and every moment of his life to God, to keep mind and body as clean, fine, wholesome, active, and completely at God's Service as he can. There is no scope for indulgence or dissipation in such a consecrated life.

There is a sense a dimension in which we are *all* saved in spite of the gates of Hell and all terrestrial appearances and fictions. God's existence and the devotion to God that is Bhakta Yoga are the guarantee of an ideal order that shall be permanently preserved.

Thus in the teaching of Bhakti Yoga is eternal bliss not merely promised; not merely stated as bound with certain conditions, but postulated, asserted, as the *only* reality. Fear, sorrow, sin,

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aloofness between God and Man, are, as in the language of Nietzsche, done away with—this is what constitutes the Divine Gita, the text book par excellence of all Yoga, especially of Bhakti Yoga. And thus shall we all live, go, work, vibrant with Joy.

SOHAM

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